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SOME THOUGHTS
ON CHRISTIAN REUNION



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*BEING SEVEN ADDRESSES GIVEN DURING
HIS VISITATION IN JUNE, 1895*

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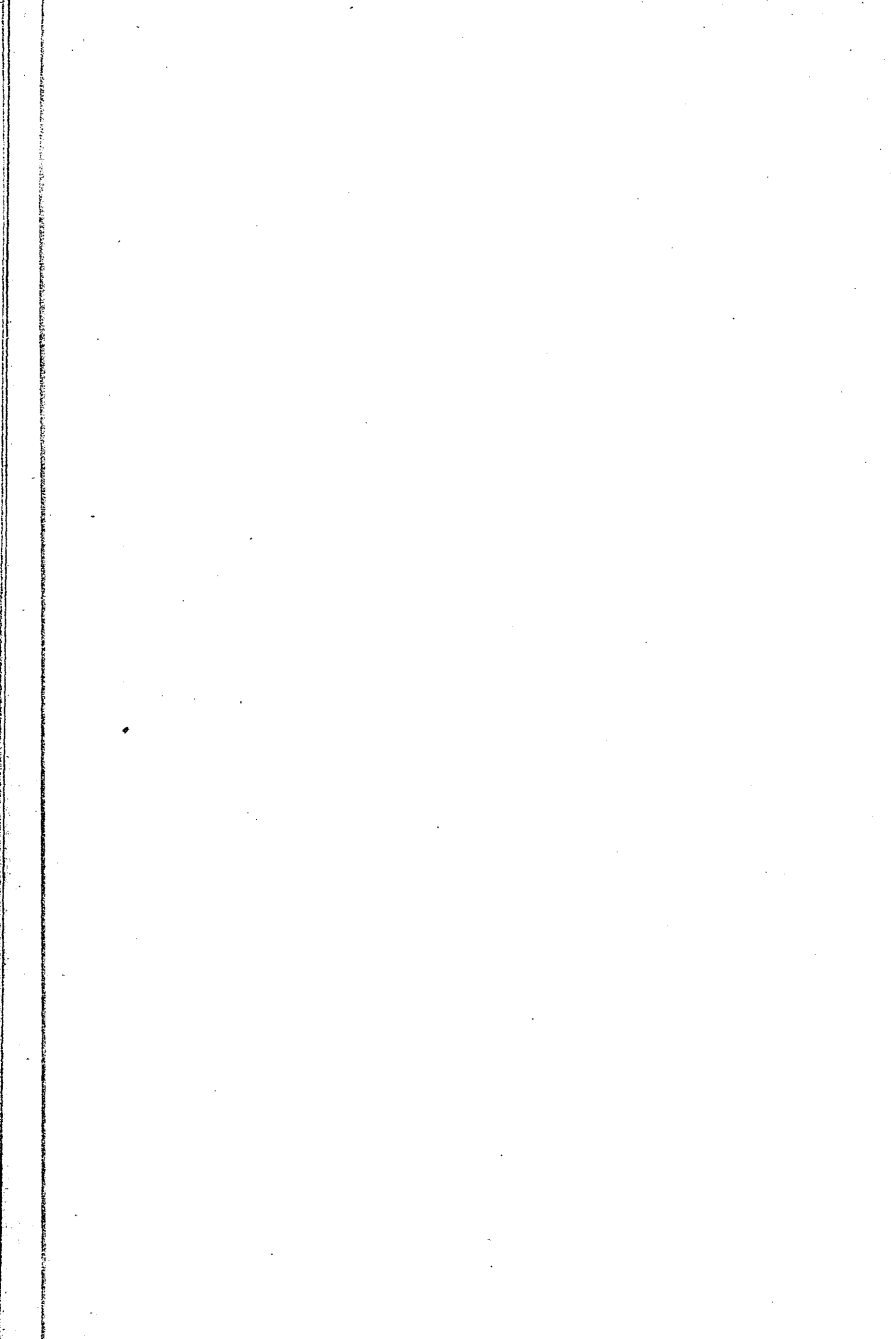
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“I believe, O thou God of Love, that all the saints on earth, by profession, ought to communicate with one another in evangelical worship, and the same holy sacraments, in the same divine and apostolical faith; in all offices of corporal and spiritual charity, in reciprocal delight in each other's salvation, and in tender sympathy as members of one and the same body. O God of Peace, restore, in Thy good time, this catholic communion, that with one heart, and one mouth, we may all praise and love Thee.”—
BISHOP KEN.



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SOME THOUGHTS ON CHRISTIAN REUNION

ADDRESS I

THERE are many matters which might fitly occupy the minds of men united in diocesan work. I might speak of the growth of the diocese, in population, in Church work and organisation. I might remind you that the diocese grows at a rate which adds 10,000 annually to its population. I might tell you of rearrangements which are of importance, as of our third archdeaconry recently created, of the appointment of a taxing master, by agreement of the bishops, in matters of ecclesiastical fees. I might indulge in retrospect and speak of those who, like our late Dean, were pillars of the Church in this diocese, encouraging us by their counsel, and still more by the simple piety and abounding Christian love which filled their

lives. But there are circumstances which lead our thoughts to another subject which has been given prominence of late, and on which the respect we owe to persons of eminence, as well as the absorbing interest and importance of the subject itself, may well invite us to meditate. I mean the subject of reunion, with all those questions regarding authority, private judgment, historical precedent, and theories of supremacy and infallibility which are mixed up with it. It will be well at first to take a brief survey of the subject, leaving important details for later consideration.

I. THE DESIRE FOR UNION.

“When the Day of Pentecost was now come, they were all together in one place. And suddenly there came from heaven a sound as of the rushing of a mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting.”—Acts ii. 1.

Such is the sacred narrative of the events of that day when Christianity first found its tongue for the world. The shadow of the Whitsuntide season is still upon us. Our function is in the same world to which the Apostles spoke with many tongues but with one spirit. Our calling is in the service of the same Church which was then baptised with the Spirit of power.

But the centuries spread between the Church and world of the Apostles' day and the Church and world of our own day. The tongues which now command the world are no longer those with which the Apostles were familiar. The languages of science, of literature, of religion, are different. The map of the world has changed a hundred times. The vast empire which then overshadowed and oppressed the world has been broken up; and the Church which was then united in one heart and one soul, which in its first ardour was animated by the spirit of men who called none of their possessions their own, is a Church of fragments, speaking in rivalry, often working in hostility, and only faintly and intermittently recognising the brotherhood of Christ.

We complain, too, of its lack of power. We feel that, considering the vastness of its resources, the number of its adherents, the unquestioned supremacy of its civilisation, the force which it wields in the world is less, far less than it ought to be. We regret, we deplore, but are we surprised? Is it a wonder that the fragments of a mirror reflect only a broken image and that the full splendour of heaven's light is not perceived? Union is needful for fulness of power. It was upon a brotherhood united in prayer and in heart that the Spirit first

came. They were all with one accord, in one place, and then the promised gift fell upon them.

No doubt where men have been made to drink into one spirit, the sense of brotherhood will be natural, quick, and keen. But is it not also true that the existence and the sense of disunion may hinder the advent of the Spirit? Is it wonderful that we fail to realise Divine love, when we are so poor in human love? When trifles are allowed to divide men who believe in one God and Father of all; when no allowance is made for diversities of race, climate, tradition, temperament, and a dull uniformity of thought and worship is deemed essential to brotherly communion; when dominion over men's faith is more valued than helpfulness in Christian joy; when, in consequence, the obligations of brotherly love and concord are lost sight of—is it altogether wonderful that the windows of heaven should sometimes appear to be closed, and the fuller invigorations of the Spirit should be missed by the Church?

But if, once more, Christian men and women over all the world, animated by one purpose, were gathered with one accord, and were looking upwards in prayer, strength and effective energy might again be vouchsafed to the Church. Under the inspiration of that fresh Pentecostal gift, the Church

might renew her youth, and the victory of the Cross, so long delayed, might at the last come swiftly.

At this season, when the memories of the first Whitsuntide are renewed, may we not fitly join our prayers for the dawn of such a day? Many voices call us to this duty. The season calls. It is the festival of that Spirit which sheds forth gifts in rich variety and yet unites men in one love. The voice of our own Archbishop of Canterbury is one with the voice of the chief Bishop of the Latin Communion in urging us to pray for union. Whatever our differences may be, none who desire that peace and love should dwell on the earth will refuse to join their prayers for an end so great, and so greatly to be desired.

II. THE EVILS OF DISUNION.

There is no doubt respecting the evil consequences of our divisions. The sense of discord disturbs the serenity of piety; its practical inconvenience hinders the advance of Christianity; the occasional ebullition of sectarian animosities breaks the peace of the world.

The man of quiet and devout heart is often perplexed. He loses confidence, doubts intrude

upon his hours of meditation ; he hears the claims of rival churches ; other communions are vaunted as more excellent than his own ; he is tempted to think that there may be safety in change, for loud-voiced promises of security work fear in timid minds. The divisions of Christendom are thus unsettling to faithful and devout souls within the limits of Christendom.

They are the causes also of perplexity without. The cause of missionary enterprise is thrown back. Can we wonder that natives are bewildered when twenty Christian bodies are competing with one another on Indian soil?

Unsettlement among Christians, perplexity among the heathen : these are evils. There is worse behind. The contentions of Christian churches have embroiled nations in war.

On the plains of Bethlehem the angels sang to the shepherds of "peace on earth." On this hallowed spot arose disputes, mean and spiteful, between Christian churches, which in our own day ended in long and disastrous war. The claim of the Latins "to have a key of the great door of the Church of Bethlehem, instead of being put off with a key of the lesser door," was disputed, and could not be peacefully settled, and was ultimately "decided by the advance of armies and the threaten-

ing movement of fleets.”¹ When the Crimean War was ended 485,000 lives had been sacrificed, and £305,000,000 of treasure had been spent. Doubtless political interests, diplomatic intrigues, and national jealousies must take their share of blame; but we cannot forget the shame of the Churches whose contentions for the possession of a key kindled the wasting flame.

III. THE GAINS OF REUNION.

If such are some of the evils of our unhappy divisions, we can estimate from them the gain of *reunion*. It would mean the passing away of unseemly contentions, the awakening of confidence in the heathen world, the reassurance of anxious hearts. It would mean also increased effective power in missionary efforts; for union would bring about economy of Christian energy. The chairman of the Congregational Union the other day compared the Churches at home to Dives, “clothed in purple and fine linen, while whole races of mankind are lying at their gate, desiring to be fed with the crumbs which fall from the rich man’s table. It scarcely seems,” he said, “as though those races get even the crumbs as long as there is one Christian

¹ Kinglake’s *Invasion of the Crimea*, vol. i. p. 47.

minister for every 900 of the population in Great Britain, and there is but one in every 114,000 in Japan, one in 165,000 in India, one in 220,000 in Africa, one in 437,000 in China." And I believe this understates the case. But accepting these figures, do we not see how easily, were Christianity reunited, this disproportion could be readjusted? The nations around would then see an army of missionaries, moved by one aim, inspired by one spirit, united by one love, and guided by one society, acting in friendly and fraternal fellowship. Their energy would be dissipated by no feuds, their calm ruffled by no jealousies, and their message enforced by the emphasis of undivided counsels, and by the example of Christian love. In Christian life, thus regenerated, the nations would recognise the truth and the faith for which they had been longing. Their outstretched hands would embrace the Christ indeed, and Jesus Christ would be seen by all to be what Chunder Sen declared Him to be—"the common heritage of Europe and Asia." Further, the force of the collective influence of such united Christendom would be felt all over the world. The rivalry of interests, the competition of ambitions, the violation of justice, the oppression of the weak, the growth of hideous vices—like that last and vilest vice of decay-

ing civilisations,—might be checked and stayed by the power of a public opinion which spoke with the voice of one-third of the world's population and with the authority of three-fourths of its civilisation. What power for good might not be wielded were the 400,000,000 of Christians throughout the globe, animated by one heart, to speak with one voice and to act with one love? Evils which now appear gigantic, unassailable, would crumble away before so great a power moved by so noble a spirit. The brazen gates of prejudice, would unfold, the iron fetters of evil custom would be smitten asunder. With the diffusion of the spirit of love and of Christ over all the earth, the impossible would become possible, and the kingdoms of the world, in a deeper and truer sense than ever realised before, would become the kingdoms of the Lord and of His Christ.

As this vision of hope spreads out before our eyes, who can refuse to join in supplication that soon and quickly the day may come when Ephraim shall no longer envy, and Judah no longer vex, and the prayer of our Master may be fulfilled. Is this dream too sanguine? Would the reunion of Christendom really produce such widespread results? Let one answer who will not be accused of prejudice. "The reunion of

Christendom," says Goldwin Smith, "is likely at last to become a practical aim. Probably it would be a greater service to humanity, on philosophical as well as religious grounds, to contribute the smallest unit towards this consummation, than to construct the most perfect demonstration of the free personality of man. As things are, rationalism and fatalistic reveries may be laboriously confuted, but amidst the energies and aspirations of a regenerated Christendom, they would spontaneously pass away."¹

IV. AGAINST FALSE EXPECTATIONS.

The vision can hardly be too bright. But nevertheless it is possible that eager souls may be betrayed by false expectations. The union of Christendom is one thing. Uniformity, or even unity, among Christian communions is quite another. Let us indulge our vision by all means, but let us be careful to paint it in true and broad colours. Whatever our hopes may be, let us see that they are based upon principles of judgment, fitness, brotherliness. Let us dismiss the dreams of preconception or prejudice.

¹ Goldwin Smith, *Lectures in the Study of History*, p. 181. See Döllinger's *Lectures on Reunion*, p. xxvii.

(i.) The reunion of Christendom will not be on the basis of uniformity. It will be union in variety, in much difference of practice, ritual and teaching. Any other is impossible, undesirable, uncatholic. The season which reminds us of the love out of which such union may spring reminds us also of that noble diversity with which the Spirit works. There are differences of gifts, diversities of operations, differences of administration. The same sun shines and the same rain falls, but the soils which are flooded by sunshine and nourished by rain are diverse, and they bring forth different fruits.

Non omnes omnia terræ ferre possunt.

While we believe in union, we must expect variety. The one Spirit may call forth different results, as the one sun ripens differing growths, and as one blood energises various members—the hand, the foot, and the head. Uniformity is not to be expected, ought not to be wished for. If we understand this, we shall perceive the virtue there may be in agreeing to differ.

The wider our knowledge of the world and of races, the more will this be apparent. If Christianity is a religion for man—that is for all men—it must possess that elasticity and that self-adapting power which will enable it to deal with

varying races. It must be capable of producing the same fruit under different forms and upon different soils. There was an interesting monograph published some years ago, entitled *Bread and Man's Place in Nature*. The design was to show that wherever man could live, bread, man's staple food, would grow ; but it was not pretended that the corn grown in torrid climates and in temperate zones would be in all things utterly alike. True religion shows similar conditions. It can flourish wherever man flourishes ; but it flourishes sometimes in one form, sometimes in another. Nations have their characteristics : they are like different kinds of soil, all capable of growing something, but not all alike in the kind of growth which they produce. National varieties and characteristics are beneficial : neither men nor races were meant to be pale copies of one another, chill, commonplace identities, but mutually stimulating and refreshing variations of human power and helpfulness. National varieties belong to the providential order. It is a poor and unworthy idea to seek to rob them of wholesome diversities.

It would seem to follow irresistibly that it is folly to expect that the type of Christianity will in all places be the same. It must partake of the race-characteristics if it is to be the fit and honest

expression of religious life. The Christianity of India will exhibit a different type from the Christianity of America. We must be prepared, as the faith spreads in the world, to tolerate much divergence from our own established Christian customs and order. The Spirit which divides to every man severally as He will, will make apparent His lordship in the Church by the development of varieties which have a fitness in each case and which can thus discharge a mission towards the whole body. We often mistake the fringe for the garment ; but this mistake will be impossible when we meet with different fringes on the same material. Nothing gives evidence of true union so much as those happy variations of custom which save us from monotony. Churches in which the pillars, though alike in height and strength, carry capitals carved with diverse leafage and flowers, give us a higher feeling of harmony than those in which every column is the dull, mechanical repetition of another. And so it was with those individuals and peoples who were chosen to be pillars in God's temple. All were alike in this, that they bore up the roof over the crowded heads of the worshippers : all stood firmly planted on earth and lifted their crests towards heaven, but they bore those varied crests as proudly and as naturally as they discharged

their common duty. The oneness of the great purpose in which they were engaged received emphasis from the minor divergences by which they were distinguished.

The Spirit wrought union through variety. Diverse gifts, diverse functions, diverse methods, all subserved the great and paramount end towards which their varieties and endowments were designed.

The expectation of reunion on the basis of uniformity is thus neither likely nor desirable. It is also uncatholic. In the best days of the Church this principle of variety was understood and recognised.

It was not deemed necessary that rites and ceremonies should in all places be one and utterly alike. St. Jerome approved the variety of customs in different Churches, laying down the principle that all ecclesiastical traditions which did in no way prejudice the faith were to be observed in such manner as each had received them from their forefathers; and the custom of one Church was not to be subverted by the contrary custom of another; but any province might "abound in their own sense and esteem the rules of their ancestors as the laws of the Apostles."¹ In a similar strain St. Augustine

¹ *Epist. ad Lucinium. Op.*, vol. iv. p. 579 (Paris, 1704).

writes respecting hereditary customs on which the Holy Scriptures have given no positive determination. "If we dispute," he adds, "about such matters, and condemn the customs of one Church by the customs of another, that will be an eternal occasion of strife and contention, which will always be diligent enough to find out plausible reasonings, when there are no certain arguments to show the truth. Therefore great caution ought to be used, that we draw not a cloud over charity and eclipse its brightness in the tempest of contention."¹ Similarly Gregory the Great did not insist that the Churches should abandon their customs and usages, and conform to the Roman use. In the same strain he counselled St. Augustine of Canterbury regarding English Christianity. "Things are not to be loved for the sake of places, but places for the sake of good things."²

This wise, and tolerant, and truly catholic spirit of allowing varieties entered into the consideration of other matters besides ritual. It was allowed in the rebaptisation of heretics, the African Church following its own use. So also with regard to clinic baptism and the readmission of the adulterer to Holy Communion. And even beyond these

¹ *Epist. ad Casulanum*, vol ii. p. 68 (Paris, 1689).

² Bede, *Eccles. Hist.* bk. i. ch. 27, p. 47 (London, 1840).

matters of discipline the spirit of toleration extended. "There are other things about which the most learned and exact defenders of the Catholic rule do not agree, without dissolving the bond of faith. There are some questions in which, without any detriment to the faith that makes us Christians, we may safely be ignorant of the truth, or suspend our opinion, or conjecture what is false by human suspicion and infirmity." There were matters about which a man might "err without any imputation of heresy."¹

And this extended to phrases which, in the view of some, were important and even protective of truth. Thus Nazianzen in his panegyric on Athanasius relates that there was a time in which a few syllables threatened to divide the Church. But Athanasius brought about union by advising each party to use its own phrase. And, in thus promoting concord and toleration, says Gregory Nazianzen, he did more honourable service to the Church than in his watchings and exposures, and not less than he achieved in his flights and exiles.²

The reason for this toleration of variety is simple and forceful. When men are agreed upon certain great principles, they can the more readily tolerate

¹ Bingham, *Antiq.* bk. xvi. ch. i. § 15.

² *Ibid.*, bk. xvi. ch. i. § 16.

differences in matters of minor detail. The power of the principles which bind them together can even welcome varieties which indicate richness and fertile force rather than any poverty or contrariety. Irenæus realised this, and in his Epistle to Victor urges him not to cut off the Churches of God who observed the traditions of divergent ancient custom.

“Among these also was Irenæus, who, in the name of those brethren in Gaul over whom he presided, wrote an epistle, in which he maintains the duty of celebrating the mystery of the resurrection of our Lord, only on the day of the Lord. He becomingly also admonishes Victor, not to cut off whole Churches of God, who observed the tradition of an ancient custom. After many other matters urged by him, he also adds the following: ‘For not only is the dispute respecting the day, but also respecting the manner of fasting. For some think, they ought to fast only one day, some two, some more days; some compute their day as consisting of forty hours night and day; and this diversity, existing among those that observe it, is not a matter that has just sprung up in our times, but long ago among those before us, who perhaps, not having ruled with sufficient strictness, established the practice that

arose from their simplicity and inexperience, and yet with all these maintained peace, and we have maintained peace with one another ; and the very difference in our fasting establishes the unanimity in our faith.' ”¹

We remember also that pleasant story told in the same place by Eusebius, where he relates the happy and tolerant intercourse between Polycarp and Anicetus. Neither Polycarp nor Anicetus could see eye to eye in the matters of the fast ; but when they met they did not dispute much on the subject. They mutually respected one another's customs. Yet they were united in worship ; and “in the church, Anicetus yielded to Polycarp, out of respect no doubt, the office of consecrating, and they separated from each other in peace, all the church being at peace ; both those that observed and those that did not observe, maintaining peace.”²

If all this be true and right, the union of Christendom cannot take place on the basis of a cold uniformity, or a dead agreement. There are matters which are important to the vitality of some individuals which are not needful for all. In like manner there are usages and teachings in the communions of different nations which are fit and

¹ Eusebius, bk. v. ch. 24.

² *Ibid.*

wise for them to respect, but by no means of vital necessity in every land ; nor even of any subsidiary profit and advantage to other communions. One prime condition, therefore, of reunion must be mutual toleration : the agreement to differ, which promotes, perhaps, a more living union than insistence on uniformity. The union, therefore, will not be such that it will bring all existing communions into a pale and colourless resemblance to one another. It will be one of toleration, of recognition of differences, even of idiosyncrasies—variety will be welcomed. It will be the union of concession, not of surrender.

Nor is there any sacrifice of principle in such a union. It rather seems to me to savour of wisdom, of charity, and of the larger view of truth than of any injury to truth ; for if the Spirit divides to every man severally as He will, so also does the same Spirit divide to every nation according to His wise pleasure—giving to each, as it were, some specific hue or colour which to our eyes may appear to contradict some other tint, but which to His eye is but one sparkle of that beam of light which He has broken to the families of the earth after His will ; which is broken not by any sundering in the beam of light, but by the interposition of that providential order

which manifests the richness and fulness of His light.

At any rate, to insist on union which makes no allowance for great varieties on important matters would be to nurture unreality in the faith of some, and this would be a greater disaster than any division could be, since if the thing which is true be not true in us as well as in God, it is, as yet, a truth which may be ours hereafter, but which it cannot profit us to pretend to believe now. It was the realisation of this which led Dr. Pusey to remark that union, though desirable in the abstract, might prove harmful if pressed. "We might," he wrote, "even each become worse by an union."¹ In the same spirit, Dr. Story,² when addressing the members of his own Church, said, "Union is only salutary and likely to be enduring when there is a real identity of will, of principle, of affection, of interest between those who are united. When this is absent, the bond of union is a galling fetter, not a link of love."

If, however, it is argued that such a course involves a compromise of principles, let it be considered that the real compromise of principle would

¹ *Life*, vol. ii. p. 248.

² *The Church of Scotland—Address to General Assembly*, p. 39.

take place were we to pretend to agree, or suppress our convictions in order to appear to agree. It is far more honest, and ultimately more helpful, to acknowledge our differences and to respect one another's honesty, than to forfeit one another's respect by pretended unanimity or insincere agreement.

But these differences, so recognised, need not hinder union in other matters, more momentous. There are indeed some who argue that there can be no agreement worthy of the name till all matters are settled. On every matter, it is said, there must be sought a reply to the specific question, Is it true, or is it false? It must be important, it is argued, to discover the truth. There is truth in little things as well as in great. But by this process of reasoning we may give a fictitious importance to the merest trifles. The importance of a question is not to be measured by the importance of discriminating the true from the false. The importance of truth can never be exaggerated; but it is not every question upon which it is important to know the truth. It is important to know the Ambassador's message; but it is not important to know whether he wears a beard or not. In the ordinary affairs of life there are many matters wherein we agree to differ. There

is probably a true or a false reply to every question of medical treatment, yet doctors can meet in consultation who might take opposite views on the value of certain drugs. The real test is valued thus: Is the question one, the truth or falsehood of which touches matters so vital that no agreement is possible? Men may have differing opinions on the reading of a particular text. There must be a true reading and a false. But this need not hinder their union in reverence for the Bible. Men may variously estimate the truth or value of angel ministry; but their divergence of thought in this matter, though it involves a true and a false, need not hinder their agreement of belief in the ministry of the Holy Spirit. Divergence of view on matters important should be no bar to union on matters essential. Nay, in the great School of men which the Church of God must ever be, there will be pupils who are learning from advanced text-books and others who are but studying their primers. It should be no cause of disunion because some have not discarded their early books, and others have entered upon larger study. It is enough that they are in the school of Christ, and the recognition of our ignorance of all the ways of God may well stimulate our charity, and save us from stumbling when we see that men who believe in the same

love are learning different things concerning Him. "The Church doth not require assent unto particulars," said Archbishop Laud. In the same spirit Archbishop Bramhall says, "Neither the rules of prudence nor the laws of piety do oblige particular Churches or Christians to communicate in all opinions and practices with those particular Churches or Christians with whom they hold Catholic communion."¹ It is only an ignorant and narrow intelligence which demands uniformity in trifles, and which cannot even in matters of opinion tolerate diversity. "Above all," wrote Döllinger, "the union of Churches is only then possible, when a high measure of mental culture is found in connection with religious intelligence and zeal. From a lower intellectual standpoint differences of rite and ceremonial are regarded as questions on which salvation hinges."² "As being baptized, we are all on either side brothers and sisters in Christ, we are all at bottom members of the universal Church. In this great garden of God let us shake hands with one another over the confessional hedges, and let us break them down so as to be able to embrace one another altogether.

¹ Archbishop Bramhall's *Works* (Library of Catholic Theology), vol. i. pp. 105, 6.

² Döllinger, *Reunion*, p. 33.

These hedges are the doctrinal divisions, about which either we or you are in error; if you are wrong, we do not hold you morally culpable, for your education, surroundings, knowledge, and training make your adhering to these doctrines excusable and even right. Let us examine, compare, and investigate the matter together, and we shall discover the precious pearl of religious peace and Church unity, and then join our hands and forces in cleansing and cultivating the garden of the Lord, which is overgrown with weeds."¹ In other words, there must be toleration of variety, charity of heart, and honesty of purpose. Little can be expected if we start on the assumption or basis of uniformity. A vast toleration in matters of ritual and ceremony, and even in matters of teaching, will be indispensable, if the reunion of Christendom is to be achieved.

(ii.) But further, still less is reunion possible on the basis of submission.

This follows from what we have said. If reunion is possible only on the basis of mutual toleration, concession, not submission, must be the order of the day. I am not now speaking of the question of authority in matters of faith. That is an important matter which will need some special

¹ Döllinger, *Reunion*, p. 154.

thought and which is closely related to the questions of reunion. I am speaking of the basis on which various Christian bodies could reunite. Such reunion must involve toleration and concession. It cannot be achieved by the submission of all communions to the authority of one. Indeed nothing is more likely to hinder reunion than the exhibition on the part of any one church of a spirit which claims submission from others. Here the old counsel, so famous in English Church history, may give us a guiding principle. "If he rises at your approach, hear him, being assured that he is the servant of Christ." The claim to be right on every point is not the mark of infallibility, but of ignorance and blindness. And if the blind lead the blind, the ditch and not the door is their portion. "If we look closer," said Dr. Döllinger, "we shall be able to assume a disposition and readiness for union among all those who admit that the communion they belong to is not absolutely the Church, the one and single Church complete in itself, but only a branch Church, which cannot claim to be itself that one Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church whereof the Creed speaks."¹

So far I think good sense and charity may carry us. Reunion, most glad, most welcome—as rain to

¹ *Ibid*, p. 150.

a thirsty land—is possible if Churches will seek it in a large spirit of charity ; recognising that none has the right to extort submission from another, but realising that each communion must be ready to concede something and to tolerate much. Such concession and toleration would simplify Christian thought. Men would learn to distinguish between important and essential teaching ; they would at length realise those central and supreme matters of faith, the recognition of which is of such importance in a divided Christendom and in a distracted world.

V. APPROXIMATIONS TOWARDS BASIS OF REUNION.

Now may we not at this point shadow forth in some sort the reasonable basis of reunion ?

No Church is infallible. The special claim of the Roman communion on this point I must leave till later. But for the present let me say, no Church is infallible. Every Church has added more or less to its credenda. Not all these new articles and dogmas are necessary to be believed by every Church. It is not reasonable to expect identity of custom, or identity of teaching in all Churches ; but it is reasonable (and every Church must stand at the bar of reason) to ask that not all

inner or national teachings and customs should be insisted on as essential to communion.

But if all of these are not to be insisted on, what are those matters of agreement upon which inter-communion might reasonably be established?

When men have lost their way, perhaps the very wisest thing they can do is to retrace their steps till they reach that point which they are sure is on the right road. This, you will remember, was the counsel of Bishop Hall. The remedy ought to advance by the same steps as the disease. If we would learn wisdom at last, Christianity must be reduced to its first principles; and a limit assigned to those articles, in which, as worthy of belief on matters of faith, the Christian community ought to acquiesce." ¹

Now when we retrace our steps we are struck by one characteristic difference between Churches now and the Church of the past. We see the enormous increase which has taken place on the dogmatic side. Have you ever tried to estimate the number of separate theological propositions and statements which are to be found in the confessions of Christendom? It is, perhaps, not wholly a waste of time to give an answer to this question; but it would take too long on an

¹ Bishop Hall, *Works*, vol. xi. p. 239 (Oxford, 1839).

occasion like this. It may, however, be noted that the Council of Trent passed at least 125 canons which condemned by anathema certain propositions on various matters. Would it be too much to say that the Churches are waterlogged with dogmas? No doubt these doctrines were affirmed with the view of meeting certain real or supposed errors. But the habit of formulating new and so-called necessary dogmas is one which grows by exercise. Water will extinguish fire, but there should be a limit in pouring on the water; for the water may sink the ship after it has extinguished the flame. And these additions of doctrine have done harm. Among the various denominations, the undue importance attached to some doctrine has been the occasion of division upon division. In the Latin communion it has been the occasion of the bitterest misery and dejection even among those who had not the heart to secede. And the sad part of the matter is that later time has often shown how small have been the matters to which importance was attached. They were burning questions once, but they have burned themselves out. There have been opinions which have been fiercely attacked and made the subject of decree, article, or anathema, which have slowly withered away by the action of time, and whose

vitality was mainly due to the bitter hate with which they were assailed. If, instead of adding some new doctrine to get rid of some false one, the Church had been content with her Lord's advice and had let them alone, there would have been less heresy and more peace in her life.

The multiplication of opinions, which have come to be treated as essential parts of the Christian faith, has thus caused estrangement, sullen resentment, open hostility, and mutual suspicion in the Christian Church. "Few were the articles of faith, proposed to the primitive Christians, as indispensably to be acknowledged and professed."¹

This difference between the simplicity of the early faith and the complexity of the later, has led many good men to ask whether the addition of articles to the early creed, even of articles which were true, was a wise or politic step. The addition by force, rather than lawful authority, of two words to the Nicene Creed has made union between East and West difficult and doubtful. A man learned and temperate as Bishop Kaye regarded the formal issue of the Nicene Creed, when the Church had already the Apostles' Creed, as little less than a disaster to the Church. It introduced in his view, the fatal principle that fresh articles of

¹ Bishop Hall, *Works*, vol. xi. p. 237.

communion were to be framed at every fresh controversy. In the same spirit, Jeremy Taylor, while approving the teaching of the creed, doubted the wisdom of all additions to the original Apostles' Creed. "If the church, by declaring an article can make that to be necessary, which before was not necessary, I do not see how it can stand with the charity of the church so to do, especially after so long experience she hath had, that all men will not believe every such decision or explication ; for, by so doing, she makes the narrow way to heaven narrower, and chalks out one path more to the devil than he had before, and yet the way was broad enough, when it was at the narrowest."¹ "We have no other help in the midst of these distractions and disunions, but all of us to be united in that common term, which as it does constitute the church in its being such, so is it the medium of the communion of saints ; and that is the creed of the apostles."² To this I may add the words of Richard Baxter's remarkable confession at the close of his life :—

"This token of my weakness accompanied those my younger studies, that I was very apt to start up

¹ *Liberty of Prophesying*, section I. vol. vii. p. 453. *Whole Works of Jeremy Taylor* (London, 1828).

² *Ibid.*, Epist. Dedicatory, cccxxiii.

controversies in the way of my *practical* writings, and also more desirous to acquaint the world with all that I took to be the truth, and to assault those books by name which I thought did tend to deceive them, and did contain unsound and dangerous doctrine. . . . I did not sufficiently discern then how much in most of our controversies is verbal, and upon mutual mistakes . . . I have perceived that nothing so much hindereth the reception of the truth, as urging it on men with too harsh importunity and falling too heavily on their errors. . . . I am no more for going that way to work ; and to confess the truth, I am lately much prone to the contrary extreme, to be too indifferent what men hold. . . . I am much more sensible than ever of the necessity of living upon the principles of religion, which we are all agreed in, and uniting these. . . . The Creed, the Lord's Prayer, the Ten Commandments, do find me now the most acceptable and plentiful matter, for all my meditations."¹

"I die in the faith of the Church of Christ before the division of the East and West," said the saintly Bishop Ken. "The basis of union," according to Dr. Döllinger, "must be the Nicene Creed, and the decisions of the first three General Councils."

¹ Wordsworth's *Ecc. Biography*, vol. v. p. 562.

Dr. Pusey would have liked subscription to be to the creeds, rather than the articles. I might multiply quotations, but these are enough to show the direction in which, in the judgment of wise, devout, and thoughtful men in all ages, the basis of union may be sought.

If we will make much of those points concerning which there is little dispute, and treat all other matters as matters either to be discussed with brotherly candour, or to be left to the individual conscience ; if we will remember

Humani opinari est, Dei scire,

there will be hope of a better day for the Church of God. When our Lord sent forth His disciples, He bade them teach all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. To show men that over all life and its darkness and disappointments, its strife and its sins, there is the never-failing providence of Him whom all may call Father—to assure them that the bond of love which binds earth to heaven is not formal and theoretical, but real as was the life of the Divine Son, who took the manhood into God, spiritualising all that was human, and suffering for the redemption of humanity ; to remind them that always the Divine Spirit of love and holiness is co-operating with them in their struggles upward,

voicing their needs and revealing Christ in them—is to possess a message large enough to touch all life, and urgent enough to reduce to their true proportions many heated controversies. To do this is to keep within the limits of those creeds which, whatever may be the importance of other matters, have been everywhere deemed sufficient to carry the message of peace and salvation to individual souls.

Above all (whatever judgment we may hold on these matters) the way of peace and reunion lies in getting nearer to our Lord and Master Jesus Christ; in studying less of human systems and theories, and more of His words; in parting from the spirit of contention that we may be joined to the Spirit which dwelt in Him; in habituating ourselves to place every thought and judgment there where His light may shine upon it: for only thus shall we leave behind the dead theories which divide us, and find fresh vitality in the old truths which unite us—seeing that nothing is true that does not find the life of its truth in Him, for He is our life—the life of our souls and the life of our teaching; for all live unto Him.

ADDRESS II.

I. AUTHORITY.

IT is at this point that what is perhaps the chief difficulty arises. For reunion, it will be readily agreed that there must be toleration of differences in ceremony and in opinion; but who will decide where the line of toleration should be drawn? who will determine what are the matters in which agreement is indispensable, and what are those wherein variety is admissible? Where shall we find a central authority strong enough and wise enough to undertake this task? And still more, how shall we ensure to any authority the certainty of being obeyed? for what authority is there which can show the right to speak and to command obedience? what authority could be found possessing clearly and unmistakably the marks of such indefeasible claim as would enlist without question the loyal adhesion of the Christian world?

We touch here the crucial question of authority.

For every class of mind this question is interesting. The subject has often been discussed. What is the seat of authority in religion? has been asked by many. Is it to be found in books or in men, in the society or the individual? is it of earth, speaking divine things with man's voice? or is it of heaven, declaring to us truths with an angel's voice?

II. THE CRAVING FOR AUTHORITY NOT ALWAYS WHOLESOME.

While some are debating the various answers to these questions, more impatient or more practical souls are demanding that the debate shall close and that this great central peace-giving centre and seat of authority shall be displayed. Souls keenly alive to the evils of division, personally perplexed among rival creeds, bewildered in the strife of tongues, cry—"Tell us what to believe. Show us the authority throned in rightful and emphatic sovereignty. Let us hear no longer these conflicting cries. Let the living voice of the Church, speaking in unmistakable tones, be heard. Let the voice of truth go forth at last, strong and clear as a trumpet which bids men gird themselves for the battle."

There are voices which sound humble, but

are by no means so. There are those who ask for guidance who are better left to stumble on alone. It is not every man who cries for light for whom such light is good. There are some who ask for light and as yet have never opened their eyes. There are natures which ask for help because they are reluctant to help themselves. There are loafers who wish to eat without toil in the intellectual and spiritual world as well as in the social. These moral mendicants are more wholesomely treated when they are thrown on their own resources. We have had grim prophecies which speak of the tide of degeneration which has set in among us. I am not sure that the strongest witness of the decay of moral energy and force among us may not be found in the weak and neurotic demand for the voice of indubitable authority. Bodily indolence is common enough. Mental indolence is more common still ; but the most common form of indolence is the moral indolence which strives to escape bracing and vigorous duties, and to shift the responsibility of faith and conduct upon any one who is weak enough or vain enough to undertake it. It is a commonplace of religious teachers that we are placed in a world where certitude on many matters is not possible. The moral discipline of the doubt and darkness which sur-

rounds us is frequently enlarged upon. Is it different in matters of faith? If we could have always at hand a certain and infallible guide, an authority for faith and conduct from which there is no appeal, the scope of moral and intellectual discipline would be fatally narrowed, and we should walk by sight, not by faith.

But if there is a weak and hysterical craving for authority, there is also a natural and justifiable wish to understand and realise the nature of authority in matters of religion. To this we must now direct our thoughts.

III. DIFFERENT KINDS OF AUTHORITY.

The worst confusion of controversy arises from ambiguity. It is vain to discuss where we have not defined. A clear understanding can never be reached as long as words are used in divergent, and often fatally divergent, senses. Half the controversies in matters of religion might have been spared had men been cautious, before dispute began, to attach a clear meaning to doubtful words. Bishop Thirlwall remarked about the Gorham controversy that none of the disputants had attempted to define the very word which was in dispute. You will bear with me, therefore, if I

ask you to remember that the word authority is capable of many meanings. There are authorities which affect us in very different ways. They appeal not to the same but to various and divergent feelings and faculties of mind and heart. In our nature there are, if I may use the illustration, different courts: there are courts of first instance, courts of appeal and supreme courts: and the authority appealed to is very different in each case. To continue the metaphor, assessors are provided in some courts who are not needful in others. To separate these, let me remind you that there is an authority of conviction, there is an authority of reason, and there is an authority of order.

(i.) There is an authority of conviction. There are truths which, when presented to us, carry their own evidence. No reason is needful to persuade us of their truth. They reveal themselves in revealing something more than themselves. They are like light which manifests itself in manifesting the whole world. These truths may be called axiomatic. They find an immediate response. To doubt them is to show, not a power of understanding, but a lack of capacity.

(ii.) There is an authority of reason. While the authority of conviction is the only one which can command an immediate and unquestioned sub-

mission, the authority of reason may produce that convincement which may, and often undoubtedly does, end in submission to the truth which is so set forth. In this case there must be a process of argument. Deductions and inferences from established principles may be made and must be submitted to verification. Appeal to what are called authorities forms of course a part of the process of reasoning. But here let it be noted that great confusion has arisen from not considering the significance and value of the term "an authority." An authority to which appeal can be made in argument is only a witness of more or less credit in the court of reason. Such an authority can enforce no final settlement of questions. Its evidence may be weak, or it may be strong enough to exercise a predominating influence in determining the conclusion, but it cannot, in the nature of the case carry any coercive power, or exercise any right which can deprive of its jurisdiction that reason before whose court it has been summoned. In this court everything must proceed by simple process of clear and candid examination of evidence. The witnesses examined may be authorities, but none of them can be considered as judges, *i.e.* as the final or determining authority in the matter, since this authority belongs to reason

alone. Such is the authority of reason, submitted to only by men when their reason is convinced.

(iii.) There is an authority of order. In the affairs of life the arrangement of some matters must frequently be delegated to certain authorities. Often these authorities are in many respects inferior to those over whom they exert authority. The police-constable is an authority of this kind. He exists to keep order in the town. In his day he is obeyed by Privy Councillors, Princes of the blood, and Judges of the land. Now submission to authority of this kind is of a totally different character from that of which we have been treating. The ground of this authority is only that of order and convenience. Its precepts and rules might well have been different; for the comfort of the public, and not moral principle, is involved. A change in methods and rules of this kind need evoke no indignation. Naturally also these rules, being made for a large number of people, or for society, are made for the general good, or for the convenience of the greatest number. They may, in the view of some, be unsuitable, but they are yielded to because the loyal good sense of men recognises that without such ready submission, worse evils, disorder, and perhaps panic would ensue.

This sort of authority is inherent in every

organised society. Every society, community, or association has the right to order its customs, rites, and methods of procedure. It is not needful that these should always, and in all places, be identical. Such customs and rules are established for the good of the society, and may therefore be made to vary with the changing needs of changing times and places. To refuse to submit to such authority, which deals thus with matters of order, general convenience, and edification, is the sign of an unreasonable and narrow nature, which lacks the power of looking beyond its own needs wishes, or prejudices.

But on the other hand, the ground on which this submission to authority is given, is on the understanding that no demand be made which is against reason and conscience.

In other words, the authority of order, because it is exercised for the general advantage, is tacitly assumed to be safeguarded by reason, and undermines its own authority when it ignores reason or violates the conscience. Such are three kinds of authority.

IV. THE FORCE OF AUTHORITY IS DUAL.

Now in all these three cases of authority, the sense of authority, whether it be that of conviction

or reason or convenience, arises from the co-operation of two factors which it is well to keep distinct. It is sometimes supposed that authority is single and alone ; it utters its voice as a monarch ; to hear is to obey. This conception is only metaphorical ; it is derived from the idea of authority armed with the single attribute of power, whose utterance is the prelude of coercion. But the mere possession of power is not in human minds a sufficient ground of legitimate authority. We may bow to it of necessity, but we do not acknowledge its right. True and legitimate authority is met by an answering voice in its subjects. The sense of authority *i.e.* the consciousness that the voice which speaks has authority, is due to the co-operation of two factors. There is the power without and the soul within ; both must speak in order that the sense of authority may be complete. The voice without may be authoritative, but it is only when it evokes the assent or acquiescence of my heart or mind that the sense of its authority is real to me.

There must be the two factors at work—the truth without and the recognition of the truth within—before the truth can make itself good to me. Till then its voice has no authority for me.

An illustration may make this clear. My cer-

tainty of the existence of external nature depends on the co-operation of two factors. It is light which discloses to men the beauty of the mountain and the forest ; it is the eye which recognises the disclosure. When I say I see the lily, I mean that eye and light have combined to reveal its beauty to me. Without the light there had been no lily to be seen ; without the eye no man to see the lily. It is because He who made the light made also the eye that I can rejoice in this vision of loveliness.

The same is true in matters of conviction. The authority of conviction is evoked by what we may call necessary truths. There are truths which we accept without elaborate demonstration. They carry their own evidence, as we say. In other words, we recognise them without demanding demonstration—we recognise them without reasoning, but not without reason—on the contrary, we acknowledge them because they are so reasonable that it would seem unreason to ask further demonstration. Such truths are the axioms of Euclid. It needs no argument to show that things which are equal to the same thing are equal to one another, or that the whole is greater than its part.

Here the authority might be deemed sole, unique ; but it is not so. The two factors combine to create the authority. The truth declared appeals to the

laws of thought within the human mind. The truth speaks, the mind responds, and so the sense of authority arises.

The same is the case with the authority of reason. In this case the truth appeals to the reason after demonstration. The reason within responds to the reasoning without; and so the sense of authority is created.

And even in the last case, the authority of order, the co-operation of the two factors will be seen at work. The appeal in this case is to that reason which we call the good sense of people. The good sense arises here probably out of the social instinct which acquiesces in abridgments of individual liberty for the sake of public good. This is an instinct which is strong in countries in which public freedom has long ruled; it is weaker where civilisation is crude or backward. It is different from the power of absolutism, which establishes order only on the basis of fear. The order we are speaking of is that order which appeals to the intelligent appreciation of public convenience, safety, and welfare. The acquiescence in the authority of order is due to this appreciation. We shall perceive this at once if we take the case of the obstinate man who refuses to acquiesce in such arrangements of public order. We call him un-

reasonable, limited, eccentric ; his refractoriness we set down to exaggerated vanity, or to some lack of co-ordinating power in his understanding. We wonder that his own common sense does not perceive the fitness of such general order for the public good. In every case the sense of authority is appealed to ; the two factors co-operate in all rightly regulated minds.

No doubt in matters of public order, authority may by sheer physical power enforce its decisions. From this it might be thought that authority can stand alone ; but this is true only in matters which are physical. There is no legitimate coercive authority in matters which appertain to the reason or the soul. In all spiritual societies, authority must justify itself ; it can only become authority by such a revelation of itself as may win the co-operation of conscience, reason, intelligence. The authority of all matters which belong to the spirit or soul of man must enlist recognition from man's inward nature, if it would not have its authority to be a dead letter or the shadow of a shade ; and this for the simple reason that all true authority, like the angel in the Revelation, stands on two feet—one planted on the earth of man's nature, and the other on the great sea which is beyond or outside us.

We cannot win certitude except through sight and light. The hawser by which the shipwrecked sailor can pass to the safe shore must be made fast at both ends, not on the rock only, but to the bulwarks of the tossing vessel. So our assurance is only won when the reason within and the truth without meet as eye and sunshine in glad revealing of truth and beauty.

The force of authority then is twofold. It gains its strength from the combination of truth with the power within, which acknowledges, or can acknowledge, the truth. In other words, truth must enshrine itself in some form by which it may be recognised by men before it can claim authority over them. Truth, like all things divine, is wide and large ; but its majestic universality is not truth for me, till it approaches as truth robed in a reasonableness which I can understand. May we say that all truth must incarnate itself before men can apprehend or truly lay hold of it as having authority over them? We may at least say that it is inoperative, and by no means authoritative till it has evoked the response of man, who, however weak he may be, cannot deny his own nature, or truly believe till authority justifies itself in some human and reasonable fashion.

The two voices—the voice of truth and the voice

of man—must give witness, and in the mouths of these two witnesses the truth may be established. And this is true of all authority, whether it be the authority of conviction, or the authority of reason, or the authority of order.

V. AUTHORITY IN RELIGION.

But while these agree in thus seeking that response of man, without which their authority is only a shadow, it must be remembered that the response which they severally seek is different. The authority of conviction seeks the response of the soul or conscience ; the authority of reason seeks the response of the understanding ; the authority of order, the acquiescence of the general good sense. Their authority over man is thus of a different kind.

It has been for want of discriminating between these different kinds of authority that much confusion has arisen.

For instance, the questions of authority in matters of faith, authority in matters of opinion, of Church authority, or of Bible authority have been so argued as though, in each case, the authority appealed to was identical. This is the reason why we find such halting and hesitating

judgments when the foundations of authority are sought, the final authority being placed by some in one spot, and by some in another : some placing it in the Bible, some in the Church, and some in the conscience ; the answers being often confused and contradictory. But if we keep carefully in view the difference between the authority of conviction, the authority of reason, and the authority of order, we shall avoid some ambiguity at the outset and thus escape much uncertainty and misgiving at the end.

(i.) What then is the place of the authority of conviction in matters of religion ?

There are truths of faith which establish themselves by this authority. They carry their own conviction with them. When we say, "Do unto others as you would they should do unto you," we affirm a moral truth which needs no argument. The power to realise it is simply the normal power of the human conscience, as real and as indisputable as the mind-power which knows that the whole is greater than its part or that two straight lines cannot inclose a space. We may call a truth like this a necessary truth. It is inconceivable to us that it could be otherwise. Had it been so our nature would have been stultified. It is here as it is with the light. The light shines and we see.

The truth is stated and we respond. The conclusion is rapid ; but the premisses are there. It is a syllogism of moral intuition. Now some such power to work conviction religion must have. Without it she lacks the fulcrum to move man's nature. The mere claim of authority is not enough. Argument will not do it. Religion wants more than blind acquiescence—more than even intelligent assent—she wants the co-operation of men's ethical sympathy. She asks that the moral power should put forth its strength. She does not seek the understanding alone—she wants conviction of soul. And conviction is only possible when the conscience—the moral throne in man—is occupied by the truth. This conviction can never come to men save through moral channels. The faith, which is thus awakened in man, transcends that which is based upon any of the usual reasons why we believe. It will not be because the Church says it, or because good and reverend men have said it, or because the Bible has said it, that this conviction takes place. It will be because the thing in itself is true. And here I may remark that one change in this matter as regards Bible authority has not been a change for the better. The earlier teachers were content to let the Bible carry its own authority. They bade men go to the Bible

and read—only reading it fully and honestly. They believed that men would see that it was God's book when they realised how truly it was man's book. They did not begin by saying, "You must believe this because it is in the Bible." They began by saying, "Read the Bible, study, observe, and understand." They had faith in the Bible, and therefore, they did not begin by demanding faith beforehand ; they were content to believe that faith would follow. There was in the old Book such an unfolding of God to man, and man to himself ; it was able so wondrously to set men's secret sins in the light of God's countenance ; it unfolded so divinely the beauty of Christ's holiness ; that they were not afraid to put it into the hands of erring and sinful men. They knew that the Son of God who walked amid the golden candlesticks revealed Himself to men there. They felt that men as they read would behold His glory ; and that so seeing Him, they would meet the authority of conviction. They believed that what He was, was just what man was looking for. He was light, and in Him they could see. He was the door, who through Himself entered into the heart of man, and who so entering in was recognised as its true Lord. They did not demand that a man should leave half his nature outside when he entered that

Temple of Truth. They asked no preliminary submission of the understanding : they asked only the honest and good heart, which sought for truth. He who was the truth would speak to those who sought. The Bible would carry its own evidence. The authority of conviction thus met was the authority of God.

This is the ultimate authority. I believe that, broadly speaking, all sections of Christian people, to whom spiritual religion is a deep reality, will acknowledge that the ultimate authority of conviction is God Himself. No doubt this truth will be phrased in differing fashions, according to the terminology or school of thought in which men have been brought up. But the firm persuasion that God Himself deals with human souls, that the best impulses, purest thoughts, and noblest ambitions of our spirits, are indeed from Him, is surely universal in Christian experience. "Madame," said a saintly man to Madame Guyon, "you are disappointed and perplexed because you seek without what you have within. Accustom yourself to seek for God in your own heart, and you will always find Him there." Those, who thus meet God within, know Him without further evidence. His revelation of Himself is His own witness. When he says "Let

there be light," there is light. Where His light shines, man sees, and the things that were dark become clear. The conscience, or the moral soul of man, responds to the divine light. Now some—notably that great and pre-eminently helpful writer, Dr. Martineau—have maintained that the seat of authority is the conscience. If this means that for all higher conviction of the soul the co-operation and approval of the conscience is indispensable, there will be few who will doubt the proposition. But the conscience is only receptive and approving on the supposition that there is something which it receives and approves. That which appeals to the conscience must carry with it an authority which the conscience can accept, otherwise no approval is possible. To put it in other words, if the conscience is the eye of the soul in matters moral, there must be some light of righteousness displayed before the conscience can say, "I see," or "It is true." In the story of conversion, this is the case. When God comes to the soul or conscience, He is recognised. The sight may bring terror; the spirit, like that of the possessed, cries out, "What have we to do with Thee? art Thou come to torment us before the time?" The soul is the subject of conviction. The conviction is a sort of recognition.

There is the soul conscious of conviction, but there is also the higher righteousness which the soul realises as having lordship over it. Two powers have come together: conscience and righteousness. The sense of authority is based on the double fact. Here, as always, authority is dual: it speaks with the voice of two witnesses. To revert to our illustration; for sight to be possible, there must be the light and the eye to see the light. The rope which is to bear the shipwrecked to the safe shore must be fixed, not to the damaged ship alone, but to the immovable shore also. Thus the communication of safety is opened. So also for conviction there must be the righteousness to be perceived as well as a conscience to perceive it. Then only can there follow recognition and approval. Stated in another way, we may say that conviction is felt when the divine within man realises the divine which is more than man. When God meets God in the soul of man, then man knows that he is but man, and yet is much more than mere man. But this cannot be, except the spirit realises, that He who made that which is within, made that which is without also. The authority is made clear in the meeting of two things, as the position of a place is known by the point of intersection of two

lines. Authority is not that of the mere conscience, but in the consciousness also of that which is more and more righteous than itself. When this recognition is felt, there is no need of argument: the authority is immediate and inevitable; the soul surrenders, for the Lord of the soul has come.

God is the supreme authority. This seems to me to be admitted by many schools. By some, for instance, conscience is called the voice of God. With these, the ultimate authority is God; but it seems to me more true to say that the conscience recognises an authority greater than itself, and so hears God's voice. It is no doubt true that it is conscience which at last speaks; it is conscience which proclaims its conviction; and thus in a sense conscience is the judge, but the foundation of its judgment is the revelation of Him who is Lord of the conscience and Father of Spirits.

That this ultimate authority is indeed God is admitted by the best divines on all sides of theological thought. Michael Medina, one of the theologians at Trent, indeed endeavoured to prove that "the ultimate resolution of faith is into the authority of the Church"; but Stapleton wrote, "*Ecclesiæ vox non est ultima fidei resolutio*," agreeing apparently with Melchior Canus, who taught that our faith rests finally on the authority of

God.¹ In the same judgment our English divines have concurred. "The authority of God's Church," said Field,² "prepareth us unto the faith, and serveth as an introduction to bring us to the discerning and perfect apprehension of divine things, but is not the ground of our faith and reason of our believing." In the same sense William Palmer writes : "divine faith is determined by the object on which it rests, that is to say, the authority of God himself. Human faith rests on the veracity of men. If therefore christian truth is believed *because God hath spoken it*, that belief is divine, by whatsoever *means* it may have been produced."³ He declares that, whether received by direct inspiration, apostolic teaching, the witness of the Church, the instruction of parents or the Bible, in all cases divine faith exists, whenever the doctrines of revelation are believed finally on the authority of God.

In the same sense Bishop Christopher Wordsworth speaks. The Church, he says, "instructs us in God's will, she calls us to hear His doctrine, as revealed by Him in Holy Scripture, of which she is the Witness and Guardian ; and *then the*.

¹ See Wm. Palmer, *Treatise on the Church of Christ*, vol. ii. p. 82.

² *Of the Church*, book iv. ch. 8.

³ Palmer, vol. ii. p. 80.

doctrine itself finally persuades, convinces, settles, and stablishes us in the Faith, through the influence of the Holy Spirit, Whose word the Scripture is, by its own inherent truth and power.

“The Church performs to us here the part of the Samaritan woman, who brought her friends to Christ; concerning whom we read that they *first* believed on Him for her saying; but when He had remained with them two days, and they had heard HIM, they believed because of His own word, and said unto the woman, as we say to the Church, ‘*Now* we believe; but no longer because of *thy* saying, for we have *heard Him ourselves*, and know that this is indeed the Christ, the Saviour of the world.’”¹

And yet more strongly Maurice wrote. “You are not to believe, you cannot believe, either fisherman or doctor, if the assertion is contrary to truth, to the laws of your being, to the order and constitution of the universe in which you are living. They may repeat it till Doomsday. It may come, as it did, with no authority, against the weight of all opinion, breaking through customs and prescriptions of centuries, defying the rules of the world; or it may come clad with authority, with the pre-

¹ Bishop C. Wordsworth, *Elements of Instruction concerning the Church*, p. 23.

scriptions of centuries, with the help of rulers and public opinion ; it is all the same, you cannot believe the words, however habitual and familiar they may be to you, if there is that in them which contradicts the spirit of a man that is in you, which does not address that with demonstration and power." To which we may add that when it comes clad with the spirit of life which claims your spirit, being none other than the spirit of the universe of which you are a part, and the Spirit of God in Whom you live and move and have your being, when it comes thus clothed with power and speaks the language to which your conscience can respond, you embrace it without doubt. It is truth ; you know it to be eternal. Its vindication lies in the light which it brings. Strictly speaking this is the only authoritative faith which ever can be ours. It is then divine faith—God is its author. In the Christian economy it comes to us by the Holy Spirit, who alone can reveal to us the things of Christ, and who works in men that conviction which our Lord declared would be the special work of the Comforter.

We might multiply witnesses ; but there can be little disagreement among Christian people, when the end aimed at by all true religion is that Christ may dwell in men's hearts by faith. Where He is,

there no other witness is needful. "For no way is the true way to God but by the way of our own heart. God is nowhere else to be found. And the heart itself cannot find Him but by its own love of Him, faith in Him, dependence upon Him, resignation to Him, and expectation of all from Him."¹

If further thought or witness be wanted, we have our Lord's own teaching. He is the door, and yet He enters by the door which is Himself. And He Who so enters is recognised by the sheep as the Shepherd; for He is His own witness. And such, as a fact, He has become to the world; He is the Shepherd whom they know at once—the moral Sovereign whom they acknowledge. He has become the conscience of humanity. He has brought conviction to the souls of thousands, but He has brought conviction also to the social conscience of the civilised world. He is the highest, and to live as He lived, *i.e.* in the spirit of His life, is the avowed and unavowed duty of all men. In this we have the authority of conviction. Its process may be diversely interpreted. We can have no doubt ourselves that it is the work of that Spirit in Whose dispensation we dwell, Who is in the world

¹ Theophilus in *The Golden Dialogue*, quoted in Dr. A. White's *Bunyan Char.*, p. 48.

and in the Church and in the hearts of men to convince men of sin, of righteousness and of judgment, by testifying of Him Who is the light of the world, and the revelation of Whom is the authority of conviction to the spirits of men.

(ii.) There is a place in religion for the authority of reason. The authority of conviction is the highest, the most indubitable which can reach the human soul. When it works no other argument is needed ; for conviction is immediate and irresistible. The man who is its subject can no more doubt the reality of God than he can the reality of the sun, or the earth, or his own existence, or the sweetness of love. It comes upon him as necessary truths arise upon us ; as the axioms of Euclid, and as the faith in a mother's love.

But beautiful and true and resistless as this may be, it belongs to the sphere of personal experience. It can carry no authority beyond its subject. That you have seen the vision of the highest is no revelation of the highest to me. When you attempt to translate your revelation into words or arguments its force is lost. You are as a man trying to explain a poem, as though the beauty which must be felt can be made clear by argument. We forget that the age of criticisms and appreciations is not the age of active imagination. The tongue

of the man that can see cannot give eyes to the blind. No doubt the authority of conviction may come to every man. But the processes by which men are prepared for the manifestation of God are diverse. There is a fulness of time in each man's story. The authority of conviction is open to every man, but it is not every man who is ready for it.

Meanwhile the tongues of those who can see may describe what they have seen. The authority of reason may demonstrate the possibility and credibility, nay, the historic certainty that such things have been. Besides the authority of conviction, which is immediate and personal, there is the authority of reason, which is mediate and comes through other channels, working towards the conviction of the understanding. It belongs not to its province to bring the happy conviction of which I have spoken. The authority of reason at the best can only win an intelligent assent. Till the moral forces of the soul are awakened, truth lies like uninvested capital—a rich inheritance, but an inheritance unenjoyed because unemployed. Spiritual forces alone can call forth spiritual power. But reason may perhaps prepare the way. The voices of teacher and prophet may make ready the way of the Lord. Reasonable instruction may

work conviction, though it cannot achieve conviction.

It is here that we touch naturally the vexed question of private judgment. We hear much of the rights of private judgment. We hear much less of the duty of it or the necessity of it. But first let me say that I think the phrase is an unfortunate one. When private judgment is mentioned, it sounds as though a man had a right to judge as he pleased, *i.e.* that his judgment was, in a sort, a matter of caprice and self-will. No doubt there are plenty of people whose conclusions are founded on caprice, inclination, and obstinacy. But where is the exercise of judgment in any such decision? This is as if a man should accept as a judgment of the court, a decision which had been arrived at when the judge was excluded. Private judgment in its true sense must mean the judgment of the individual understanding on the questions submitted to it. It supposes that the reason has been exerted, and that the judgment arrived at is in accordance, not with fancy but with the verdict of that reason.

The exercise of this reason is a duty. No man has a right to make his judgment blind. By doing so, he does himself much more than an intellectual injury, he does himself moral harm; for though

indeed it is the reason which is the judge, yet to refuse to let the reason act is to call into operation some other power and force which hinders the judge from acting, and thus an unlawful pressure is brought to bear on one of the sacred functionaries of our nature. It is true that we may suspend judgment. But the suspense of judgment is totally different from the blinding of the judgment. The refusal to judge on inadequate grounds is a right and reasonable course. But when we blind our judgment, we refuse to look at the evidence, and yet we proceed to judge. The one is a manly course ; the other is unmanly and mostly unconscientious.

It is usually a vain evasiveness ; for in the end the exercise of the judgment is a necessity. Two men, as different in mental qualities as Archbishop Whately and Mr. Gladstone—the one possessed of a mind strong, limited and logical ; the other, of an understanding facile, expansive and argumentative—have urged this upon our attention.

“ A man who resolves to place himself under a certain guide to be implicitly followed, and decides that such and such a Church is the appointed infallible guide, does decide, on his own private judgment, *that one* most important point which includes in it all other decisions relative to religion.”¹

¹ *Cautions for the Times*, p. 18.

So wrote Archbishop Whately. Mr. Gladstone speaks in the same sense. Sir George Cornwall Lewis in his book on Authority made this statement: "The choice of a guide is as much a matter of free determination as the adoption of an opinion on argumentative grounds."¹ On this Mr. Gladstone commented as follows: "The determination to accept as the final rule of belief all declarations by the Pope, which the Pope himself may define to be *ex cathedrâ*, is as much an act of 'private individual judgment' as if the determination were to follow Luther, or Wesley, or Swedenborg."²

On the whole, then, it appears that we cannot escape a personal decision on matters most momentous to our life and comfort. Every day we are so deciding. When we choose our doctor, or our lawyer, when we decide upon an investment or upon a profession, we exercise what is most emphatically our private judgment. It has always seemed to me a mistake to decry private judgment. Would it not be wiser to advise men thus: "Seeing that you cannot at all escape the burden of deciding for yourselves, it is your wisdom as well as

¹ *On the Influence of Authority in Matters of Opinion*, p. 63.

² Mr. Gladstone, *Art.* in *Nineteenth Century*, March 1877.

your duty to exercise care and circumspection in your judgment. Use in religious matters as in other matters, your very best and most conscientious judgment. The Church has no fear in bidding you to do this, for she only seeks to present to you reasonable grounds of belief. The true, inward abiding conviction of faith can come only from Him who is the Spirit of truth. He only can so testify of Christ as to make Him a living reality, an abiding friend, and a changeless Redeemer. But, meanwhile, till that day dawns in your heart, follow the reasonable guidance which is at hand. We ask the acceptance of nothing as true, for which we cannot give adequate authority. We believe that the truths, which the Church sets forth, are such as can commend themselves to those who will calmly and candidly use their honest judgment."

Advice such as this seems to me to be the right counsel to give. But, however that may be, I may remind you that it is the only counsel which the Christian Church can give; since in the tribunal of reason it is only what commends itself to reason that can prevail.

I know, indeed, that many men—yes, good men—have counselled the submission of reason to authority, instead of the submission to authority

for reason's sake. And this counsel has been given on the plea that there is a moral gain in such an act of submission. It has always appeared to me that there is a confusion of mind at the back of such advice. The enemy which is feared is generally found to be self-will. The submission of the reason is the discipline of self-will. But is this so? I can well understand the importance of mastering our self-will. I can also understand that often this self-will inspires our choice or decision in certain questions. But in so far as our judgments are swayed by self-will, they have not been guided by our reason. A judgment which is due to self-will is an unreasoning judgment. The exercise of our reason is a check upon our self-will. To imagine that the submission of our reason will discipline our self-will, is as wise as supposing that the horses will go more obediently when the coachman has abandoned the reins.

But, besides this, it is forgotten that so to submit our reason is to lose sight of the importance of truth. No man ought to accept a proposition as true without facing the question, Is it true or not? To submit our reason to authority is to decline to ask this one important question. There are few people who will go so far as to say that the mere submission of the reason is

of value apart from the question whether the doctrine submitted to is true or false. It certainly startles one to find Dr. Pusey advocating subscription to the Articles—though he was no great friend to them—on the ground that it witnessed to the principle that religion was to be approached with a submission of the understanding;¹ and adding that he would say the same of a person in a Mohammedan country, or under any system which was not plainly and purely diabolical. But a careful study of the letter in which this sentiment was expressed will show that the real principle which Dr. Pusey had in mind, and which he sought to maintain was the very simple and most true one, that before a man can fairly and honestly judge of any faith or system, he must have been within it, as it were. The mere outside criticism is sure to be rude, narrow, unjust. And this must be very true of religion, which is designed to be a practical mode of life and not a mere theory or philosophy. But what Dr. Pusey seemed to overlook was the grave moral injury which is done by enforcing subscription to propositions which were either not believed, or which had not been considered. The moral harm of insincere subscription in the one case, and of levity in the other, appears

¹ *Life*, vol. i. p. 301.

to me to far outweigh any supposed advantage of moral discipline.

On the contrary, it seems to me that the moral discipline of using our reason and of seeking to know truth is a very great and precious one. It is always the path of honesty. It is often the way to a higher and securer faith, which realises the power which is with us

\ " In the night,
And dwells not in the light alone."

But however we may determine the question of the moral discipline in the modes of approaching truth, it is surely fatal for any Church to adopt the attitude which asks men to accept propositions and teaching which it cannot justify by evidence. We may safely say that whatever theories any Church may hold on this matter, it is quite certain in practice to act on the principle that it can advance reasons for its belief.

The whole question, however, I believe to be the result of a confusion between the authority of conviction and the authority of reason. The deep inward conviction of faith, which arises in the human heart through the working of the Divine Spirit, does not stand upon an array of reasonings, but upon evidence immediate, intimate, self-attesting. This

evidence acts with the authority of conviction. The soul so convicted does not ask further argument. It confers not with flesh and blood. But this authority is quite different from the authority by which specific creeds or doctrines are set forth. In the case of spiritual illumination the witness is that inner, spiritual, personal witness, which appeals primarily to the conscience. No theories are formed ; no propositions are debated ; the soul has found its Lord. But the authority on which creeds and articles are received is different. We are in another region ; reason, evidence, witnesses are needed. We are invoking the authority of reason, and reason must be awake to hear the appeal. The records of the past, the documents which are accessible, the judgment of experts, are now all of value. The authority of a MS. and the canon of a council are nothing to the soul which has met with the illumination which follows the conviction of sin, righteousness, and judgment. But here it is different ; propositions have been formulated, doctrines have been affirmed, authorities have been invoked. Proof and evidence must be forthcoming. The value and authenticity of documents is of moment. If all this is true—where are we if not in the court of Reason? The teaching of the Churches must be tested by reason and evidence. Whatever their

authority may be in other matters, here they must submit to investigation.

(iii.) About the authority of order in religious matters there will be but little dispute. Our own Church has claimed such authority in her 34th Article, and in doing so she indicates that the object of rites, customs, and ceremonies must be general edification. They need not be in all places the same and utterly alike. Every particular or National Church hath authority to ordain, change, and abolish ceremonies or rites ordained only by man's authority, so that all things be done to edifying.

Practically the Church in all ages has accepted this view. Different liturgies and varying uses prevailed in different parts of the world. Good sense accepted the order in one place and approved the different order elsewhere. In these matters private judgment should yield to public profit.

Briefly, then, there are three kinds of authority—the authority of conviction, the authority of reason, and the authority of order. The authority of order may be freely conceded to every Church. The authority of conviction can be claimed by no Church: it is a matter between the soul and God. The authority of reason a Church can only claim by showing that her position and teaching is

reasonable on the witness of that evidence which in the nature of the case alone can determine the matter. The authority of conviction is above all Churches. The authority of order is within the power of all Churches. For the rest, every Church must justify herself at the bar of reason.

ADDRESS III.

I. THE BIBLE IN RELATION TO AUTHORITY.

AMONG the witnesses to faith, the Holy Scriptures hold a special place. They claim high authority. It will be well to consider their position.

The confusion between the different kinds of authority must be kept in mind. The authority of conviction, *i.e.*, the authority which the soul at once and without asking further reason accepts, is the authority of truth bringing immediate conviction. The vehicle of this may be the counsel of a friend, the meditations of the heart, the circumstances of life, a sermon, a prayer, an accident. It is most frequently the Word of God. Certainly St. James gives a prominent place to this power of the Word of God, when he attributes to its agency the greatest change of all. "Of His own will begat He us with the word of truth" (James i. 18). But whatever the vehicle may be, the word of truth

read or spoken, or the thoughts of men's hearts roused, when the authority of the truth is felt, there is no need of argument. It is the work of the Spirit, it is the revelation of Christ, it is immediate, and beyond the power of the soul to doubt.

But when we come to the establishing of doctrines, *i.e.*, theological propositions, we appeal not to the court of conviction but to the court of reason. Inward conviction is one thing, the establishment of a theological position is another. One is a work spiritual, the other is of reason. In the controversies of the Churches, if we except those matters of order and observance which may be left to national or local custom to determine, the appeal in matters of dispute is an appeal in the court of reason. Our reason must determine the value of the arguments and the credibility of the witnesses cited on either side. Now, among the witnesses so cited, there will, undoubtedly, be brought forward the teaching of the Holy Scriptures.

II. ATTITUDE OF THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND.

And in the first place, I will ask you to remember the place which our own Church has assigned to these Scriptures.

Her language is simple and clear.

The Sixth Article declares—"Holy Scripture containeth all things necessary to salvation: so that whatsoever is not read therein, nor may be proved thereby, is not to be required of any man, that it should be believed as an article of the Faith, or be thought requisite or necessary to salvation."

On which let me remark :—

1. This does not mean that we are prohibited to believe many things which are outside the Bible. As a fact we do and must believe many matters for which we cannot give Bible authority. We believe the laws of gravity and the laws of motion, the teaching of science, the facts of history, on grounds which are quite outside the Bible range.

2. This does not mean that every religious custom, rite, or ceremony, must show Bible sanction, for we have seen that it lies within the right of Churches to ordain and to change such matters. They come under the head of the authority of order.

3. It does not mean that we are to refuse to believe scientific facts, or clearly-proved conclusions of natural history, which are, or seem to be, contradicted by the Bible; for the range of the Bible witness is restricted in this Article to

“articles of faith” and “things necessary to salvation,” *i.e.*, to those intellectual conceptions of the conditions by which the soul of man can lay hold of, and live by, the power and life of God.

4. It does not give a clergyman of the Church of England the right to reject other important articles of faith to which he has subscribed because he fancies they cannot be proved by the Bible ; for the Article does not treat of those positions and doctrines which she, for the sake of order and discipline, and general harmony, expects her ministers loyally to subscribe, but only of matters requisite to individual salvation. She believes, indeed, that the position which she has taken up on such matters may be proved from the Bible. She freely concedes to every man the right to persuade his own mind on matters of faith by going to the Holy Scriptures ; but she expects her ministers to be one with her when they declare that the doctrine of the Church of England as set forth in her articles is agreeable to the Word of God.

5. But the Article most certainly does mean that in matters of faith the witness of the Holy Scriptures is the predominating witness ; and that every Church is bound to justify her teaching in matters

of faith, and her declaration of any thing as essential to salvation, by the Holy Scriptures.

There is no doubt of this. The words are quite clear. The Bible "contains" these necessary truths. Doctrines which cannot be proved by the Bible ought not to be put forward as articles of faith, or as necessary to salvation. The words of the Article are emphatic. But there is further and corroborative evidence of the mind of the Church. The Church of England in the Eighth Article declares her acceptance of the three Creeds, the Apostles' Creed, the Nicene Creed, and the Creed commonly called the Creed of Athanasius. "They ought," is the language of this Article, "thoroughly to be received and believed." But the Article does not end there—the Church will be loyal to her own position; she will apply to her own decision in this matter the principle she laid down in the Sixth Article. These Creeds ought to be received and believed, because "they may be proved by most certain warrants of Holy Scripture." You will observe we are not now concerned with the question whether the Church of England is right in her view, that the case of these Creeds can be so proved. We are only concerned with the principle on which she asks her children to accept them. She does not fall back on any magic

claim of inspired insight into truth; she does not plead any inherent authority in matters of faith. She asks her children to receive the Creeds because they can be proved by Holy Scripture.

Throughout her order she is true to this principle. She enjoins the observance of it on all whom she sends forth qualified with full powers of ministry. She requires every man admitted to the priesthood to pledge himself to observe and maintain this principle, making it a guiding law to himself in his teaching and ministry. "Are you persuaded," she asks every clergyman at the solemn moment which immediately precedes his ordination when he is answering those questions, which are put to him for the double purpose that the congregation of Christ there present, "may understand his mind and will in these things," and that the promise made at so solemn a moment may the more move him to do his duty—"are you persuaded that the Holy Scriptures contain sufficiently all doctrine required of necessity for eternal salvation through faith in Christ Jesus? And are you determined, out of the said Scriptures to instruct the people committed to your charge, and to teach nothing, as required of necessity to eternal salvation, but that which

you shall be persuaded may be concluded and proved by the Scripture?"

In the words of the question we can hear the same language as we met with in the Article. The Scriptures do contain all that is necessary to salvation, and the clergyman is asked if he is persuaded of this. Nothing is to be taught in the parish as required of necessity for salvation, but that which can be proved by the Scriptures; the clergyman is asked if he is determined to observe this principle in his teaching. His answer is, "I am so persuaded, and have so determined by God's grace."

I have said enough to make clear (what after all you well know), that the Church of England gives the most emphatic and predominating place of authority to the witness of Holy Scripture. Nothing in her judgment may lawfully be termed indispensable to faith, without the clear authority of the Word of God.

"That the Scriptures do not contain," says Bishop Jeremy Taylor, "in them all things necessary to salvation, is the fountain of many great and capital errors; I instance in the whole doctrine of the libertines, familists, quakers, and other enthusiasts, which issue from this corrupted fountain. For this, that the Scriptures do need a

suppletory, that they are not perfect and sufficient to salvation of themselves, is the *πρῶτον ψεύδος*, the great fundamental both of the Roman religion, and that of the libertines and quakers, and those whom in Germany they call 'spirituales'; such as David George, Harry Nicholas, Swenckfeld, Sebastian Franck, and others."¹

III. ATTITUDE OF THE EARLY CHURCH.

Now I am quite ready to allow that our own Church is not infallible. She never claims such a position. She regards herself as one among other particular Churches. She is but a branch Church of Christendom. It may fairly be asked whether in assigning such a place of special and eminent authority to the Bible, she is acting in accordance with primitive teaching? Is her usage in this respect a Catholic usage? The question is a fair one, and I proceed to put before you certain facts and opinions which will enable you to judge of this matter.

First, it was the opinion of some of the best divines of the Church of England that the position taken up by our own Church on the matter was sound and truly catholic. It would be wearisome

¹ Bishop J. Taylor's *Works* (Heber's Ed.), vol. x. p. 391, 2.

to give you a long array of names and quotations, but I will quote briefly the opinions of two divines.

The first is the opinion of Jeremy Taylor, who belonged to no narrow school of thought ; whose writings have become classical in our literature ; whose devotional books, the *Holy Living* and *Holy Dying*, have been a support to thousands ; who was a firm asserter of ecclesiastical order ; a strong defender of episcopacy ; a man who can by no means be viewed as negligent of the catholic aspects of Church questions. He was, moreover, as his works testify, a diligent student of Patristic literature. In his judgment the early Church gave pre-eminence to the authority of the Holy Scriptures on all questions of doctrine. He writes as follows :—

“ If we inquire upon what grounds the primitive Church did rely for their whole religion, we shall find they knew none else but the Scriptures, ‘ Ubi Scriptum ? ’ was their first inquiry. ‘ Do the prophets and the apostles, the evangelists, or the epistles say so ? Read it there, and then teach it ; else reject it.’ ”¹

And this is no isolated passage, for it is taken from one of his works in which he has devoted

¹ *Works* (Heber's Edition), vol. x. p. 393, 4.

thirty-five pages to show the sufficiency of Holy Scripture to salvation.

My second witness shall be Hooker, a divine whose combined caution, fairness, and judgment have earned him the title of Judicious ; a man who had no sympathy with the extravagance of sects, and who demonstrated with circumspect and affluent wisdom the folly of expecting Scriptural authority for every Church custom and practice. But when it comes to the question of matters of doctrine essential to salvation, he is one with Jeremy Taylor in his view of the pre-eminence of authority assigned to the Bible by the early Church. This is his language :—

“To urge anything upon the Church, requiring thereunto that religious assent of Christian belief, wherewith the words of the holy prophets are received ; to urge anything as part of that supernatural and celestially revealed truth which God hath taught, and not to show it in Scripture ; this did the ancient Fathers evermore think unlawful impious, execrable.”¹

I believe that it would be found that on this matter there was no divergence of opinion among the divines of our own communion, from Jewel and Whitgift to Bramhall and Cosin. But were

¹ *Hooker*, vol. i. p. 302 (Keble's Edition).

they right in their view that this was the attitude of the early Church?

Here again, I will not weary you with quotations, but one or two facts and citations may stand as types of the opinions entertained in those far-off times.

Let us pass into the great chamber where are assembled the Bishops who gathered at the great Council of Nice. Do they give us any hint of the authoritative guidance under which they are assembled? Do they claim the spirit of special revelation to deal with the difficult questions with which they are confronted? What do we see? What do we hear?

That great and august assemblage of men who came from stately cities with the pomp of imperial favour, or from distant and poverty-stricken dioceses with the marks of hardship on their faces and even the honourable scars of martyrdom upon their persons, is dominated by one supreme and striking symbol of their allegiance. Enthroned in the view of all, alike a guide and a caution in their debates, a copy of the Gospels is to be seen. And what do we hear? We hear earnest voices in discussion, we hear phrases of philosophic discussion; but the arguments turn upon what is revealed—upon what the Apostles have taught. They have the Apostles'

Creed ; they have no wish to alter or to add to that. You remember how earnestly Bishop Bull set forth this fact in his work on this subject. In the judgment of these fathers it was no new opinion they wished to affirm ; what they are careful to set forth is the old truth which can be justified by the clear verdict of Holy Scripture.

And now from the presence of this stately council let us turn and listen to one whose name has been foremost on people's lips, who has suffered persecution, who has been pursued by calumny and threatened with death, and who has become in the judgment of all ages the archetype of the hero of faith who could stand alone against the world, let us hear what the great Athanasius has to say on this matter. He knows that there are men in his day, as there have been men since, who are clamouring for councils to settle every new question or novel development of opinion. These he rebukes, telling them that there is stronger witness even than councils. "In vain do they run about pretending that they are asking councils concerning the faith, when the divine Scripture is more powerful than all?"¹ In the same strain he says : "If ye are disciples of the Gospels, speak not evil

¹ *Epist. de Syn. Arim. et Sel. Opera*, vol. i. p. 873 (Paris 1627).

against God, but walk by the Scriptures. But if ye choose to fable matters diverse from the Scriptures, why do ye contend with us, who will never bear to speak or to hear what is contrary to them?"¹

Passages like these explain the significance of the place of honour given to the Gospels in the Nicene Council. These men were jealous to speak and decree nothing which had not the warrant of our Lord and of his Apostles. What Athanasius thus affirms is affirmed also by other fathers of the Church. Suffer me to give you one or two examples of the principle which they so zealously maintained.

Irenæus writes, "But we ought to entrust such things to God who also made us, knowing most rightly that the Scriptures are perfect, for they are spoken by the Word of God and by His Spirit."²

"And indeed we have received the economy of our salvation by no other, but by those, by whom the Gospel came to us; which truly they then preached but afterwards, by the will of God, delivered to us in the Scripture; which was to be the pillar and ground of our faith."

¹ *Ibid.* p. 621. *De Incarnatione contra Apol.*

² *Adv. Hær.* lib. ii. ch. 47, *Cf.* also lib. iii. ch. i. (Oxford, 1702).

So Tertullian, when dealing with the errors of Hermogenes. "Let the shop of Hermogenes show where this thing is written. If it is nowhere written, then let him fear the woe pronounced against them that add to or take from (Scripture)." ¹

Cyprian, a strong maintainer of Church order and discipline, challenges those who would enforce a special rule by asking for Scripture authority. "Let nothing be innovated (saith he), in the custom handed down to us from tradition? But from whence, I would ask, have we this tradition? Whether is it descending from the Lord's, and from the Evangelical authority, or cometh it down from the commandments and Epistles of the Apostles? For that those things are to be done which are written, God witnesses, and propounds to Jesus Nave [Joshua], saying, the book of this law shall not depart out of thy mouth, but thou shalt meditate in it day and night. . . . If therefore it be either commanded in the Gospel, or in the Epistles or Acts of the Apostles, that they that come from any heresy, should not be baptised, but that hands should be imposed upon them unto repentance, then let even this holy tradition be observed." ²

St. Cyril of Jerusalem speaks with clear em-

¹ *Adv. Hermog.* § 22, p. 417. Rothomag. 1662.

² *Ep. ad. Pomp.* lxxiv. *Opera*, vol. ii. p. 211 (Oxford, 1682)

phasis: "Concerning the divine and sacred mysteries of the faith, we ought not to deliver even the most casual remark without the Holy Scriptures: nor be drawn aside by mere probabilities and the artifices of argument. Do not then believe me, because I tell you these things, unless thou receive from the Holy Scriptures the proof of what is set forth: for this salvation, which is of our faith, is not by ingenious reasonings, but by proof from the Holy Scriptures."¹

St. Basil is no less explicit on this subject. "What is proper for the faithful man? That with a certain fulness of mind, he believes the force of those things to be true, which are spoken in the Scripture, and that he rejects nothing, and that he dares not to decree anything that is new. For whatsoever is not of faith is sin; but faith is by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God."²

And again to the same effect he writes: "It is a manifest defection from the faith and a conviction of pride, either to reject anything of what is written, or to introduce anything that is not, since our Lord hath said, 'My sheep hear my voice' and 'they know not the voice of strangers.'"³

¹ *Catechet. Lectures*, iv. *Lib. of Fathers*, vol. ii. pt. 1, p. 42.

² *St. Basil. Moral. Reg.* 8, ch. 12, quoted by Jeremy Taylor *Dissuasive*, vol. x. p. 401 (Heber's Ed.).

³ *Ibid. Homil. de Vera fide.*

“Whatsoever we say or do ought to be confirmed by the testimony of Divinity, inspired by Scriptures, both for the full persuasion of the good, and the confusion or damnation of evil things.”¹

St. Jerome, a favourite authority with Roman writers, is as emphatic as St. Basil. “The error of parents and ancestors is not to be followed ; but the authority of the Scriptures and the rule of God who teaches.”² He bears witness to the paramount authority accorded to the Holy Scriptures in his day when he affirms that teachers would gain little or no hearing unless they attempted to fortify themselves by the Scriptures. “They that prattle without the authority of Scripture, have no faith or trust,” *i.e.* none would believe them, “unless they did seem to strengthen their perverse doctrine with Divine testimonies.”³

“Those things which they make and find, as it were, by apostolical tradition, without the authority and testimonies of Scripture, the sword of God smites.”⁴ Similar is the language of the greatest of the Latin fathers, the writer under whose authority men of all schools have delighted to shelter themselves, the man the variety of whose experience,

¹ *St. Basil*, p. 403, *Moral. Reg.* 26.

² *Com. in Jer. Op.* tom. iii. p. 575 (Paris, 1704).

³ *Com. in Tit. Op.* tom. iv. p. 419 (do.).

⁴ *Com. in Agg. Op.* tom. iii. p. 1690 (do.).

the obvious sincerity of whose life, the range of whose erudition, the stoutness of whose Churchmanship is everywhere admitted, St. Augustine. He expresses himself thus : " If any one concerning Christ or His Church, or concerning any other thing which belongs to faith, or your life : I will not say if we but (what St. Paul hath added) if an angel from heaven shall preach unto you [*præter-quàm in Scripturis legalibus et evangelicis accepistis*] besides what ye have received in the legal and evangelical Scriptures, let him be accursed." ¹

"The Scripture is the consummation or utmost bounded rule of our doctrine, that we may not dare to be wiser than we ought." ²

And if we ask for further witness, let us hear the sacred orator who persuaded men so eloquently—the Nathan, as Dante calls him, the Nathan of his age, St. Chrysostom, teaching his people concerning the Scriptures. " If there be need to learn, or to be ignorant, thence shall we learn it ; if to confute or to argue that which is false, if to be corrected or chastened there be need, for exhortation, for comfort.

. . . . That the man of God be perfect. . . . Not, therefore, without it can we be perfected. . . . " Instead of me," he, St. Paul, says, " thou hast the Scrip-

¹ *Contra lit. Petilianæ*, lib. iii. c. 6. tom. 9, p. 301 (Paris, 1685).

² *De bono Viduit.* ch. i. tom. 6, p. 371.

tures ; if thou desirest to learn anything, hence thou mayest.”¹ Or, again:—“Let no man look for another master. Thou hast the oracles of God, no man teaches thee like to them.”²

I have given enough to show that the position of the Church of England in assigning so high and eminent a place to the authority of Scripture is not deviating from, but is simply acting in harmony with the principles of the early Church and the teaching of the best of the Fathers. She has never repudiated the guidance and help of those early ages and those eminent men ; but she has claimed that in assigning the predominant authority she has done to the Holy Scriptures, she has only been acting on the lines which were laid down by the best and wisest in primitive times.

And this need not surprise us. We may put the whole question in another form. Every age has striven to justify itself by the preceding age. To argue from precedent is a common custom. To establish matters by it has been the protection of order and the guarantee of freedom. Such has been our English habit when among us

Freedom broadens slowly down
From precedent to precedent.

¹ *Hom. in ii Tim.* tom. xi. p. 714 (Paris, 1734).

² *Hom. ad Coloss.* tom. xi. p. 391.

The early Church and the early fathers felt this. They clung, as the glorious days of Christ and His apostles began to recede out of reach, to the precedents and teachings which had been early established. Gospel authority and apostolic guidance was dear, priceless, and irresistible to them. In the Holy Scriptures they had the mind of the earliest Church. Is it wonderful, if any authority was to prevail, that this most primitive authority of all, the written words and recorded precedents of the Church in which Christ lived and in which His apostles wrought, should be, in their judgment, the first, the chiefest, the most indisputable authority of all?

IV. CATHOLICITY OF THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND IN THIS MATTER.

Here I must pause. The other questions which press upon our minds, the guidance of the Spirit, the protection of the Church from error, the question of infallibility, we must leave till later. Meanwhile I think we have seen enough to reassure our minds respecting the catholicity of the position taken up by our own Church on this question. She does not set aside the weight of other authority. She allows the exercise of authority to all particular Churches in matters of rite and ceremony.

She allows the authority of reason, asking that matters in dispute shall be proved. But when it comes to questions of essential faith, *i.e.*, questions distinct from those belonging to mere order, scientific realms, or pious individual opinion, when it comes to questions of articles of belief declared to be essential to salvation, she demands that the authority of the earliest Church of all, whose mind is set forth in the Holy Scriptures, shall be adduced. That earliest Church and those first teachers must have known what was essential to salvation. These were the teachers of the faith delivered to the saints. All teaching for the salvation of mankind must be in harmony with what was thus first taught, and in no other way could men be secure of that harmony except by the diligent and docile study of those writings which were the matrix of all theological literature, those well-established canonical writings which embodied in the purest accessible form the veritable teaching of our Lord, the Head of the Church, and of the apostles who had lived in His presence and received His earliest commission.

V. OBLIGATIONS OF THE CLERGY.

These things being so, suffer me to say one word to you who minister in our own Church. It is our privilege to belong to a Church which has scrupulously

set herself to follow the best and the purest traditions of Christendom. She was no reckless disdainer of early precedent ; she sought not out of fickleness or childish love of novelty to give herself to needless change ; she went to the earliest and most reverent sources, and from these she sought guidance. And chiefest of these she paid homage to those first, choicest, and most sacred sources of all divine knowledge, the words of Christ and the teachings of His apostles, the gospels and epistles.

And shall not we, who are the sons and ministers of a Church which has been bold for freedom and reverent for sacred precedent, catch something of her spirit and draw our inspiration from those sacred founts to which she has pointed us ? The Bible has been passing through a time of trial ; criticism has shown to us more of its structure ; fresh lights of history and antiquity have been shed upon its meaning and its truth. We live when, more than at any other time, we may claim the help of light and knowledge in our Bible studies ; we live in an age when more than any other time these studies are demanded of us.

Need I remind you of what we have promised ? " Will you be diligent in prayers, and in reading of the Holy Scriptures, and in such studies as help to the knowledge of the same ? " You answered, " I

will endeavour myself so to do, the Lord being my helper." Need I recall to you the solemn words of exhortation addressed to us in the same hour, reminding us that this study was indispensable to the effectiveness and the increasingly matured power of our teaching and influence? "Seeing," it was said to us, "seeing that you cannot by any other means compass the doing of so weighty a work, pertaining to the salvation of man, but with doctrine and exhortation taken out of the holy Scriptures, and with a life agreeable to the same; consider how studious ye ought to be in reading and learning the Scriptures, and in framing the manners both of yourselves, and of them that specially pertain unto you, according to the rule of the same Scriptures." For the clergy of the Church of England there can be no doubt on this matter. They are bound by the most solemn and reiterated obligations to study the Scriptures, to give them a first place in their reverence and regard, to make them the subject of their meditation and the corrective of their teaching. In proportion as we are true to these our obligations, we shall wax riper and stronger in our ministry, we shall be able to make Christ real to men, remembering that profound saying of St. Jerome—"Ignoratio Scripturarum, ignoratio Christi est."¹

¹ *Com. in Isai.* tom. iii p. 2. (Paris, 1704).

ADDRESS IV.

I. RACE INFLUENCE AND RELIGION.

IT is usual in speaking of Christian Reunion to speak of the separate Churches or communities into which Christendom is divided ; and to treat of the difficulties and prospects of Reunion from the standpoint of these divisions. The position and temper of each communion has been canvassed. The catholicity or uncatholicity of this body or that has been discussed. The scriptural or unscriptural character of its position has been assailed or defended. This is no doubt a natural mode of procedure, but I am not sure whether it is altogether the wisest and the best course. It is certainly not the only way of dealing with the matter. At any rate, I venture to put forward another aspect of the subject.

Instead of dealing with the mutual positions of various Christian denominations, I propose to take a survey of Christendom, and to note some of the

tendencies which have been at work there, and to classify some of the factors which must be taken into account. The consideration may teach us some useful lessons.

II. CHURCHES AND RACES.

The work of religion is in the world. Its duty is with men of different race, climate, and speech. This means a large area and a vast variety of conditions. But when we survey the work of Christianity, we may exclude for the moment the great continents of Asia and Africa—for though missionary work is being carried on in these places, the work is still (alas ! that it should be so) comparatively new, tentative and incomplete. At any rate the Christian elements are so small that they may be treated as quantities not likely at present to affect the result. The history of Christianity is written, as far as its great characteristic struggles are concerned, in Europe, if we give an extended meaning to the term, rather than in Africa and further Asia. For the moment, also, we may omit Russia from our thoughts, as the part which the Greek Church has played in the later questions of Christian thought and theology has been small. The great struggles of the past

have been fought among the Latin, Teutonic and Anglo-Saxon races, and these races and their special characteristics and tendencies must be considered as supplying some of the factors in the problem of Reunion.

Before we proceed to the Christian form of these race-tendencies it will be wise to observe what were the original or early religious characteristics of these families.

III. RELIGIOUS CHARACTERISTICS OF LATIN RACES.

Now it will be impossible to go fully into this question, but may I ask your attention to the account given of the old Roman religion? There is a reason for noting this specially, for although there are many and various strains of blood among what we call the Latin races, yet these races more than others fell under the sway of Imperial Rome, and imbibed, if they did not share, their characteristic faith. "In the Roman, as in the majority of the old Italian cults, prayer is a magic formula, producing its effect by its own inherent quality, and without reference to any moral disposition of the worshipper: no one prays except for his own private advantage: there are registers called *indigitamenta*, containing the list of gods who provide for all the

wants of men. Worshippers must beware of mistakes." These gods "are innumerable." "The good woman in Petronius was right when speaking of Campania, she said: 'This country is so peopled with divinities, that a god is easier to find in it than a man.'" "Omnem istam ignobilem deorum turbam quam longo ævo superstitio conguessit," as St. Augustine said.¹ "It (the religion) was essentially the religion of the State: there was no priesthood distinct from State functions: the State was the true God of Rome." The religious ceremonies required little or no moral or personal co-operation of the worshipper, they were done for him; if rightly done, the mere observance secured the blessing. "Know," said Cato, "that the master sacrifices for the whole household." This religion did not occupy itself with ideas. "Rome never had the faintest conception of dogma." With its strong practical sense, Rome admitted to its circle the local deities of conquered countries. "The altars of Rome and of Augustus became the centre of an hierarchical organisation of flamens and Augustal sevirs (*i.e.* colleges of priests, consisting of six members) which, to a much greater extent than is commonly supposed, furnished the basis

¹ *De Civ. Dei*, vi. 9, 10.

for the division of dioceses and ecclesiastical provinces.”¹

“The Roman,” says Duruy, “knew nothing of divine love. . . . Full of affright he entered the sanctuary For the ceremonies all was settled beforehand, even to the prayer, which should only rise from the heart, and soon they begin to pray in forms which are no longer understood. . . . By the omission of one word a sacrifice became useless, a prayer vain. The lawyers say at a later period, ‘qui virgula cadit, causa cadit’—through a comma, one loses his suit. . . . The feeling of religion has submitted to much slavery, but never has it been enchained in such strict bonds. . . . Religion was a bargain, and worship a contract in due form; a *quid pro quo*. Plautus bluntly says so: ‘He who has made the gods propitious always gains large profits.’ This piety, which calculates so exactly, shows us that the people lacked certain higher qualities of mind; having no religious spirit they had in later times no philosophic spirit.”²

It will be seen from what I have here gathered that the religion of Rome was not deeply spiritual: it was ceremonially exact: it was animated by fear, not by love: it had multitudinous gods, but it

¹ Renan, “Hibbert Lectures,” pp. 10-15.

² Duruy, *Hist. of Rome*, vol. i. pp. 96-100.

made the welfare of the society, of the empire, its first consideration. "No religious interest was recognised apart from State interest."¹

IV. RELIGIOUS CHARACTERISTICS OF TEUTONIC RACES.

When we turn to the Teutonic races we find a religion of a different order. Religion here takes a larger range, it grasps the outlines of what has been called the great world-drama of natural processes. In this it accords with most ancient religions, but it takes a wider sweep and gives a more ethical tone to the idea. The conflict which is seen in nature, is felt to have some deeper application. "Wodan, the storm-god, is the guardian of warriors and princes, the arbiter of battles, who gathers in his Walhalla those who met death in the combat ; who grants riches to his brave friends, but who also watches over the sacredness of right, of oaths and covenants." He inspires the poet and the seer. He has his weakness as Zeus had. He is Zeus, Apollo and Athene, all in one. Thor is his son—a nature-god also, the patron of agriculture and marriage. Loki is the fire-god, first the friend, then a faithless

¹ *Ibid*, vol. i. p. 102.

traitor to the other gods—cast out and put in chains, till the last decisive battle, when, loosed again, the conflict is to be renewed, and Loki, together with ten other gods, is to be destroyed. “Loki is the personification of imperfection, of innate contradiction with the idea of the divine, in fact, of the untruths of this world of nature-gods, in which, objectively at least, a prophecy is contained of a true belief in God afterwards to appear. This idea is represented from another side, in Balder, who was originally a sun or light-god, and then, like the Indian-Iranian Mithra, became the personification of moral innocence and purity, goodness and wisdom. He is said to be the wisest and the most beautiful of the Asus, who alone never had part in any wickedness, and is therefore loved by gods and men.” It has been said that the German religion resembles the Persian ; in a sense it shares its dualism, it has a deep moral earnestness which realises the surpassing beauty of goodness, and the hard struggles and cruel fate which often await it. In this conflict the German religion showed a true sympathy. It saw “in faithful co-operation in this conflict, in the brave devotion of all one’s powers to the good cause of the gods, the great task of human existence.”¹

¹ Pfeiderer, *Phil. of Rel.* vol. iii. pp. 87-89.

Religion like this stands in some essential matters in marked contrast with that of the Latin races. They are burdened with a multiplicity of gods; the Teutonic religion has but few. They are anxious about mechanical exactness: the German thinks of the conflict of the world. The Latin thinks of the maintenance of the great society to which he belongs; the German of the actual duty he owes in the world-struggle. The Latin thinks how he may win the favour of the gods: the German seeks to dedicate his powers to the cause of the gods. The Latin asks that the gods shall be with him: the German, that he may be with the gods.

V. THESE RACES IN RELATION TO CHRISTIANITY.

Now it will not surprise any one who considers the principles or laws under which changes of thought take place, to find that when the Christian faith overspread the world, it took in different places a tincture from the antecedent faith and conditions of the society in which it found itself. Nothing is more striking than the survival of the traditions, customs and legends, of Pagan times among Christianised nations. Even to the present day, the influence of past superstitions which

belong to pre-Christian times, survives among the nations of Europe. "Almost all our superstitions are the remains of a religion anterior to Christianity, and which Christianity has not been able entirely to root out."¹ The pertinacity with which these pagan customs prevailed may be seen in the easy way in which certain facts of Christianity became adapted to meet the taste, and to sustain the customs of those who were still saturated with the old Roman religion.

Draper, in his *Intellectual Development of Europe*, may press the matter too far, but there is a vein of truth in his remark: "The classical scholar need scarcely express his surprise that the *Feriæ Augusti* were continued in the Church as the Festival St. Petri in vinculis; that even to our own times an image of the holy Virgin was carried to the river in the same manner as in the old times was that of Cybele, and that many pagan rites still continue to be observed in Rome. Had it been in such incidental particulars only that the vestiges of paganism were preserved, the thing would have been of little moment; but, as all who have examined the subject very well know, the evil was far more general, far more profound. When it was announced to the Ephesians

¹ Renan, "Hibbert Lectures," p. 32.

that the Council of that place, headed by Cyril, had decreed that the Virgin should be called 'the Mother of God,' with tears of joy they embraced the knees of their bishop; it was the old instinct peeping out; their ancestors would have done the same for Diana. If Trajan, after ten centuries, could have revisited Rome, he would, without difficulty, have recognised the drama, though the actors and scenery had all changed." ¹

If it be true that customs thus prevail, taking on the robes of the new faith, though remaining essentially the same as of old, we shall not be surprised to find that strong national characteristics made themselves felt through the new creed, and that the Christianity of the German races should be different in complexion from that of the Latin races.

And this is precisely what we do find. Wherever the Latin races are predominant, the tendency to multiply the objects of adoration, to rely upon ceremonial exactness, and to regard religion from the standpoint of the interests of the vast society rather than that of the individual, is still found to exist. Wherever the Teutonic races are strongest and of purest blood, the realisation of a conflict in which each has to take his part, and in which

¹ Draper, *Intel. Dev.* vol. i. p. 264.

the individual must follow at all hazards what seems to him the divine course, forms part of religion.

To put this in another way, leaping over the boundaries of some centuries, we may observe that the Catholic tendency is strong in the Latin races and that the Protestant tendency is strong among the German races. Macaulay remarked that the Reformation had never made much way among the Latin races. In Germany, kings put themselves at the head of the reforming movement, and in doing so gave expression to the people's thought.

It is needless to dwell on the fact that the Latin nations are mainly Catholic. Efforts to preach another Christianity among them have not hitherto met with much success. However well intentioned these efforts have been and undoubtedly are, they have not as yet caught hold of the popular mind, or appealed to the popular imagination.

On the other hand, among the Teutonic races the principles of Protestantism have been welcomed. And wherever the Teutonic race is strongest and their blood less mixed with Latin strain, the Protestant tendency is most decided. The account given by Dr. Döllinger is as follows:—

“In 1557 the Venetian ambassador, Badoero, who was well informed, reported that 7-10ths of the

German nation had become Lutheran, and 2-10ths belonged to other sects—the Reformed and Anabaptist—while only 1-10th remained Catholic. The greater part of Austria and Bohemia was Protestant, and in Bavaria, the nobility and the Emperor Maximilian II. himself, though he continued nominally Catholic, were of the same religion. But since the end of the sixteenth and beginning of the seventeenth century, half Germany has gradually become Catholic again. . . . But it was chiefly by the oppression and banishment of the Protestant ministers, the forced emigration of those who adhered to their faith, the destruction of Protestant Bibles, catechisms, and hymn-books, and generally the employment of all those means of coercion which the Jesuits had reduced to a system, that the so-called counter-Reformation in Austria and Bavaria and the ecclesiastical principalities was brought about.”¹

No doubt the causes to which Dr. Döllinger refers promoted this decline of the Reformation movement in Southern Germany ; but it seems to me significant also that it was in those regions nearest to the Latin nations and where the Teutonic strain may reasonably be supposed to have been less pure, that this retrogression took place ; while

¹ Döllinger, *Reunion*, p. 73.

in Northern Germany, and in Holland, the Reformation—notwithstanding the sword, the fagot, and the flame—was never stamped out. The race counts for something in these movements. In Holland, where the people became Protestants of the sturdiest type, there were yet some who clung to the old Roman Church ; but there came a day when the claims of that Church were too strong for them ; and when Rome finally condemned Jansenism, the old Episcopal Church of Holland became Jansenist, rather than yield. When in our own days the heavy yoke of the decree of Infallibility was imposed by the Vatican Council, it was from the most German portion of Roman Catholic territory that the strongest resistance arose. The men who led the old Catholic movement were mostly men of Teutonic blood or breeding.

We thus may observe the existence of certain race tendencies. The Teutonic race shows a tendency which we may roughly call Protestant ; the Latin race a tendency which we may call Catholic. But these names are naturally inadequate, inasmuch as they express only the exhibition of tendencies when brought into contact with religious questions. The existence of these tendencies is much earlier than the Reformation. In the view of some they have a physiological basis. It is

certainly curious to notice that the very skulls of these races exhibit differences.

"The shape of the skull," Canon Isaac Taylor writes, "is one of the least variable characteristics of race."¹ The skull-form may be expressed by the numerical ratios of certain measurements, as the proportion of the extreme breadth to the extreme length of the cranium; the relation of the height to the length, and so on.

The term, "dolicho-cephalic," or long-headed, is applied to skulls where the length from front to back is great in proportion to the breadth; "brachy-cephalic," or short-headed, to those where the breadth of skull is great in proportion to its length, and "ortho-cephalic" to the intermediate class.

The Germans are "dolicho-cephalic," or long-headed; the Latin races are "brachy-cephalic," or short-headed; the Anglo-Saxon race holds a position midway, and is "ortho-cephalic," or better balanced, as we might say.

"Now that Christianity has spread over Europe, it is divided into two opposed camps—the Catholic and the Protestant, the Church of Authority and the Church of Reason, the line of division coinciding very closely with the line which separates the two great races of Aryan speech. The dolicho-

¹ I. Taylor, *Origin of the Aryans*, p. 63.

cephalic Teutonic race is Protestant, the brachycephalic Celto-Slavic race is either Roman Catholic or Greek Orthodox. In the first, individualism, wilfulness, self-reliance, independence, are strongly developed ; the second is submissive to authority and conservative in instincts. To the Teutonic races Latin Christianity was never congenial, and they have now converted it into something very different from what it was at first, or from what it became in the hands of Latin and Greek doctors. The Teutonic peoples are averse to sacerdotalism, and have shaken off priestly guidance and developed individualism.”¹

“Roman Catholicism, or the cognate creed of the Greek and Russian orthodox churches, is dominant in all those lands where the brachycephalic race prevails ; Protestantism is confined to the dolicho-cephalic Teutonic region.”²

So that in the judgment of some, the structure of the skull counts for much in history.

VI. THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THESE FACTS.

Now facts which show the persistence of certain race tendencies, are facts which it is necessary to understand if we are to interpret rightly the history of the past, or deal wisely

¹ I. Taylor, *Origin of the Aryans*, 247.

² *Ibid.* 249.

with our duty in the present. These physiological differences represent race qualities, and race qualities are factors in the evolution of human history. They do not make for materialism: they make for ministry: they indicate the direction in which such races may help each other; they mark the range of its service. And these tendencies of the Teutonic and Latin races respectively may indicate, not the necessity of perpetual antagonism but the law of complementary service. They express facts of humanity which exhibited in the story of races, may become capable of illuminating one another. They show us that in the human soul there is a twofold tendency, a tendency to express itself, and a tendency to surrender itself. By the one tendency we seek to cast off all that hinders our self-development. Custom, usage, prescription, what sanctity is there in these when the soul seeks to find freedom, and claims the inviolable right to express itself? Whatever men may say, the soul must be true to itself. By the other tendency we return upon the past; we seek to find the links which bind what we were to what we are becoming; we wish to identify ourselves with the law of growth; we shrink from the chill nakedness of solitary responsibility. We are individuals, but we are social beings, and we want a place

in social evolution, as well as individual expression. In the one case we are men, in the other case we are members of society. In the one case we seek the mountain apart, in the other we seek the synagogue. In the one case we follow reason, in the other we are content with authority. In the one case we desire to prove all things; in the other we hold fast that which seems good. Will any one affirm that either of these tendencies is wholly or necessarily evil? Are they not like the once talked of centripetal and centrifugal forces, by the joint action of which the moving body pursued its way? It would have been a wanderer in space had there been no beneficent force binding it to its centre: it would have ceased to shine as a light in heaven had there been no wholesome force of original impulse which prompted it to heroic venture. It would have been equally its loss had it bounded into the unknown beyond, or had it buried itself in some central body. It could only discharge its function, and shine where God had placed it by the mutually correcting laws of its being.

It is so, as it seems to me, in the history of humanity. He is an unwise man who flouts the conservative instinct, he is dull and unintelligent who scorns the progressive instinct. We needed our fathers before we became men; but we ought

to become men before we can wisely act as fathers. The growth of our institutions is usually due to the combined and counteracting influence of both tendencies. Without the one we should have no stability : without the other no advance. The one teaches us reverence, the other imbues us with courage. Art is usually the handmaid of one ; invention and discovery wait upon the other. We cannot afford to part with either of these powers. we cannot afford to spin into space, or to be lost in inertia.

True religion cannot afford to remain stationary, neither can she afford to deny her past. She will therefore, welcome both tendencies ; she will rejoice in a tendency which draws men into one body, she will welcome a tendency which consecrates and inspires individual effort. She will not be so much the friend of union, that she will be the enemy of truth or freedom. She will not be so much the ally of liberty, that she will forget the bond of brotherhood.

But while we realise the advantages of both tendencies, we must be alive to the dangers which arise when they are separated. In other words, we must realise that danger arises wherever the Church is given into the hands of the extremists. The extremist is the man who cannot see the other

side of a question, who so values the one thing he sees that he denies that any other thing exists, who, alive to one law, has no mind for the existence of any controverting or correcting law. In the hands of these men faith is crushed and the Church of Christ is set in peril. The history of the past illustrates this. Whenever the strong individualistic tendency has run riot as in some of the extreme Protestant sects these disasters have followed. Wild individualism exaggerating its own importance and vain of its powers, has mistaken the sway of its own unrestrained impulses for inspiration, and with a presumption, which approaches to belief in its own infallibility has suspended the decalogue at the bidding of its dreams ; or else at the command of its own fancy has pursued its speculations in narrow fields, regardless of many important and widely-sprinkled facts of life and history. Thus there has been wrought out a theoretical religion unsuitable to men and unworkable, as all schemes which are the product of human brains, blind to the experience of the past, are doomed to be.

On the other hand, extremists on the opposite side have brought about disaster. The instinct which returns upon itself and seeks its life only in central authority, whenever it has been allowed un-

restrained play, is the occasion of evil. Those who refuse to allow the free action of individual reason, and check inquiry and answer every question by decree rather than by argument, are driven to discover some central authority for which they claim some special inspiration. The claim of special inspiration is followed by the suspension of moral laws, a new sort of Catholicity arises which no longer consists in careful and candid examination of the past, but in bold assertions. Men are no more allowed to ask, "Was this or that Catholic?" The new method takes an opposite line. Reasoning, if reasoning it can be called, is inverted. Men must not say, "This is Catholic because it was *semper ubique et ab omnibus*. But this is Catholic, and therefore it must have been *semper*." The central authority is created and invoked. Under the influence of this spirit reason is prohibited, facts are suppressed, documents are invented, and the final scene shows to us how extremes may meet. For the last stage in the drama of both these tendencies is in one respect the same. Exaggerated individualism ends in the claim of personal inspiration; exaggerated reverence for the society ends in assigning something which it is difficult to discriminate from personal inspiration or infallibility to an individual.

When we trace the story of the tendencies which

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mark the Teutonic and Latin races respectively we learn the lesson which cautions us against separating powers which are designed to be naturally corrective. The Protestant drift, the Catholic drift, when left alone, rob the world of something which is precious. The one splits the river of life into a delta of streams, none of which are navigable ; the other, by seeking to gather too much to itself ends by bursting through its banks and turning fertile lands into malarious swamps.

VII. THE ANGLO-SAXON RACE AND CHRISTIANITY.

When we turn from these races, the Teutonic and Latin, to the Anglo-Saxon race, we find what we should have expected. The Anglo-Saxon, with his ortho-cephalic head, combines both tendencies. He has the same strong sense of his own individual life and responsibility as the German, together with even a more passionate love of freedom. He has also a deep reverence for the past and a clear capacity for recognising national and social claims. The history of our own land has been in one sense the story of the struggle of these contending tendencies for the upper hand ; in another sense it is the story of the beneficent influence which each tendency has exerted upon the other. The victory of neither

tendency has been complete or prolonged. The progress of our institutions has been by oscillations which have indicated now the ascendancy of one and now that of the other. The healthy assertion of individual freedom, has grown, but it has done so by a happy regard for precedent. The nation has moved forward, but always with a look back at its past. It has sought in this way a development which is harmonious as growth. It loves not violent breaches with the past. It would have the days of its history bound each to each by that natural piety which regards the sacredness of the past, while it would courageously fulfil the duties of the present. Such a people will have their revolutions and their rebellions. They will expel a dynasty to-day ; they will recall it to-morrow. They will have free institutions, but they will have a continuity in their history and their growth. In religious matters it will be the same. They will suffer no foreign dictation ; they will endure no spiritual tyranny ; but they will have a religion whose roots are in the past, and whose continuousness is clear. Hence while seeking freedom, they will regard precedent. They are not so Protestant, but that they can understand Catholicity ; they are not so Catholic as to resign the exercise of thought or the fulfilment of duty to any other on

their behalf. Their Church will partake of these features. It will be a Church which is the national and fitting spiritual home of free men ; but it will not be a Church which was built yesterday, or which stands by the charm of any individual name however saintly or honoured. It will be a Church in which the Catholic and Protestant elements combine, in so far as they express real and legitimate tendencies and claims of human nature. It will claim for men the right to examine and judge for themselves. No magic arts and no imperious authority will be allowed to rob them of the right and duty of personal responsibility and judgment. In this they will be daunted by no power ; for they are men to whom of all things liberty is most precious ; but they are men of reverent spirit and of ardent imagination. The past appeals to them, they were not born yesterday : the noble spirit bred in ages of dignified toil, of splendid struggle and of glorious ancestry is in them. They can stand up as free men, and bate neither jot nor tittle of their rights ; but they can doff their plumes before lawfully constituted authority, and bow down in the House of God. And so their Church, which speaks of the liberty of the individual, and insists that worship to be spiritual must be the worship of free individual souls, yet

recognises the claims of the past, and seeks to fashion herself after the purest and most primitive model. She can discard the idle superstition, but she can conserve the harmless custom. She can courageously dismiss vain and degrading rites ; but she can cherish a stately worship which embodies the liturgies and use of ancient times. She can rejoice in the catholicity of her order, the freedom of her worship, and her loyal submission to the guidance of the Scriptures. She avoids the errors of extremists, and in doing so she opens for herself a way of helpfulness in the future. In the day when the prospects of reunion may be brighter than they are now, she may in the providence of God be able to render service which no other communion in Christendom can so aptly fulfil ; for she is the Church of a race which has overspread the world, she is the Church which has nourished in her bosom men as catholic-minded as Bramhall, Jeremy Taylor, Cosin, Ken, and Keble, and men as independent in mind as Latimer, Whichcote, Butler, and Maurice.

ADDRESS V

I. THE LATIN CHURCH

It has been the misfortune of the Latin Community that it has been governed too much throughout its history by men who could only see one law or tendency in nature, and who could assign little or no value to any other. This has been a double misfortune: for it accentuated the tendency which earlier history had initiated. The religious drift existed in the race before Christianity was preached in Rome. It was intensified by the political history, which made the supremacy of their city in their eyes a fate, a glory, a religion. The splendour and the invincible strength of Imperial Rome invested the name of the Eternal City with a glamour which could not forsake it, even when the seat of empire was removed to Constantinople. Indeed the removal of the centre

of political power to the Bosphorus gave the opportunity for the indulgence and realisation of another dream, in which the Rome, which had been shorn of one crown, should become splendid with a glory more majestic than before, when a triple crown should be placed upon her head.

The history of the Latin Church has been the history of the victory of the extremists. There have not been wanting men who, in every epoch of trouble, have tendered wise and conciliatory counsels. These have from time to time exercised a moderating influence: they have been able to represent that religion should enlist and sanctify all the real and innocent tendencies of humanity. But whenever the day of crisis has come, the struggle has ended in the defeat of the moderates; and the fatal *non possumus* has been spoken which has slowly narrowed the borders of the Church and multiplied its dogmas.

It would take too long to enter upon this story. But it is important, in enforcing the view that I have taken, that I should set before you some illustrative evidence.

II. THE ASCENDENCY OF EXTREMISTS.

In the early part of the sixteenth century a vehement controversy arose which was embittered

by personal feelings, and which, to a degree, embodied the jealousy with which the Conservative party regarded the growth of the new learning. Reuchlin, a man of learning and character, was attacked as a heretic. In the view of some the case was one which ought to have been dropped. The Pope went so far as to order silence. But the attacking party would not be satisfied. Erasmus vainly remonstrated with Hochstraten, who took a leading part in the attack. In the judgment of Erasmus the tumult made about Reuchlin's book kept it before people's minds. The errors of the book, according to him (such as they are) are not the only things assailed. "Philology and literature, studies which illustrate theology and serve it," are denounced by inconsiderate partisans. There is a danger lest theology may seem to calumniate learning. But the remonstrance of Erasmus was in vain. Hochstraten and the Dominicans at length prevailed. The Pope issued a brief. Reuchlin's book was suppressed, and Reuchlin himself condemned to silence. The expostulations of the moderates were fruitless: the extremists prevailed.

A little later, a controversy far larger and more wide-reaching arose. It was the controversy which is associated with the name of Luther. The ques-

tion of Indulgences was brought under debate. Luther expressed himself in conciliatory terms. He was willing to submit ; but before doing so, he would like to understand. Cajetan, who met him at Augsburg, would explain nothing. The Roman Curia displayed the same spirit. The minds of those in power were full of the idea of supremacy. Submission without reason, and without explanation was expected. They did not see that they were enforcing a tyranny ; and that a tyranny must provoke a revolt, sooner or later. Concession might have averted catastrophe ; but the advisers of the Pope had no thought of concession. Instead of reason and argument, they saw their way to the aid of the secular arm—they would work through the emperor.¹

Moderate men, who viewed the situation with wiser eyes, saw that there were evils which needed reform. Erasmus wrote to the Pope (Adrian VI.) recommending reform to be carried out without regard to class interests : he suggested an amnesty, he advised inquiry. Vives thought that the time was past for exercising authority against the rebels.² Cardinal Egidius, a man of genuine piety and much experience, submitted to the Pope a memo-

¹ Creighton's *Papacy*, vol. v. pp. 90-92.

² *Ibid.* p. 206

rial. In it he counselled that a commission should be appointed to determine the limits of the power of the keys ; that abuses of the papal power should be reformed. He pointed out the evils of the system of Indulgences. "Had Luther," writes Bishop Creighton, "been met in the spirit shown by the memorial of Egidius there would have been no German revolt. If the admissions now made by Egidius had been made by Prieras, Luther would have been satisfied. . . . In the eyes of Prieras, it was heretical to criticise ecclesiastical practices, because they rested on the unlimited and unlimited power of the keys, committed to the Pope."¹ But though these wise men counselled concession, no concession was allowed. Schemes of reform were resisted largely from motives of self-interest. "One part only of the memorial of Egidius met with unanimous consent—that Luther must be crushed. 'Heresy,' said Cardinal Soderini, 'has always been put down by force, not by attempts at reformation.'"²

Thus once more the counsel of moderate men was rejected, and the force of the irreconcilables won the victory.

Erasmus looked on at the struggle with a half-contemptuous sorrow. "As things go now," he

¹ Creighton's *Papacy*, vol. v. p. 208.

² *Ibid.* p. 210.

writes, "there will be no improvement, let the dice fall which way they will. The Gospellers go for anarchy; the Catholics, instead of repenting of their sins, pile superstition on superstition."¹

"The Pope's satellites," he writes in another letter, "daily draw the meshes tighter of the old tyranny. Instead of relaxing the bonds, they tie the knots harder. . . . New customs, new rules have been introduced into the Church, which have acquired the force of law. The schoolmen will have their dogmas received as articles of faith. If," he sighs, "if there was any right belief in Christ as the Eternal Head of the Church!"²

As late as 1530, Bishop Faber "wrote to the Pope that, if even then he would undertake the correction of abuses, there was great hope that all Germany, and, indeed the whole Church, would be brought back to its earlier condition of peaceful orthodoxy. But all was in vain. The Popes persisted in their policy of silence and of putting every obstacle in the way of the Council so anxiously looked for."³ And when we ask what was the reason of this policy, so incomprehensible and so suicidal on the part of those who claimed the right and the power to guide the Church, the answer given by Dr. Döllinger

¹ Froude's *Life*, pp. 374.

² *Ibid.* pp. 308, 309.

³ Döllinger, *Reunion*, pp. 67, 68.

is that three causes conspired to produce this result. First, the resistance of those about the Pope, who profited by the abuses ; secondly, the dread of the diminution of papal power which reform would involve ; and “lastly and chiefly, it was the supreme principle and soul of the whole Roman system of ecclesiastical administration that made the Papacy hostile to all reform—the principle, viz., that a claim once preferred could never be abandoned, an error or injustice never publicly confessed, and therefore never remedied. Authority must remain inviolate and can never be sufficiently exalted.”¹

The advocates of moderate and conciliatory policy were disappointed. The victory rested once more with the extremists.

We pass to a later period. Benedict XIII. was Pope. The Gallican Church was excited respecting questions which arose out of the Jansenist controversy. Moderate and conciliatory measures were earnestly desired by thoughtful men. Cardinal de Noailles was highly esteemed by Benedict ; he approached the Pope through a friend. The Cardinal submitted twelve propositions or articles of belief on which he and his friends desired the Pope’s judgment. The articles contained the state-

¹ Döllinger, *Reunion*, pp. 69, 70.

ment of very simple matters. They affirmed that none could receive salvation without faith in a mediator, more or less developed ; that the Mosaic law did not give by its own proper virtue the grace needful to fulfil God's commandments ; that none can resist the will of God ; that the most important point in religion is the command to love God ; that the reading of the Bible is useful beyond doubt in itself, but is not necessary for salvation in the case of all without exception. The Pope received the memorial graciously. He declared them to be "sound, true, and catholic," and expressed his intention to send a brief to the Cardinal to "content him as to this proposition." But the good intentions of the Pope came to nothing. There was a power behind the throne. The affair was referred to the commission, and instead of the commendation or assurance which had been expected, a draft pastoral, drawn up by the Inquisition was sent in its place. The Pope's wishes were overruled ; the hopes of men of piety and moderation were disappointed ; the counsels of the extremists once more prevailed.

The same features reappear time after time in the history of the Latin Church. Again and again the hopes of moderate, just, and wise men are shattered. The Ultramontanes, to whom the

ascendency of the pāpal see is the first and most important matter, are wary, evasive, urgent, irreconcilable, as occasion requires. Men of larger hearts and more candid minds have no chance against a party united to affirm, defend, and develop at all costs one principle and policy. They are regardless of the hopes, feelings, and arguments of others. Their unscrupulous persistence is rewarded by victory.

It cannot be said that the facts of which I have been speaking belong to past history alone. In our own day we have had the same scene enacted. The declaration of the Immaculate Conception took place in 1854; the declaration of Papal Infallibility in 1870. They were passed to the pain and grief of the wisest and best in the Latin Church; they were passed, in spite of remonstrance, by the engineering and pertinacity of an extreme and dominant party. They were deadly blows, as Mr. Gladstone said, aimed at the old historic, scientific, and moderate school. It is affirmed indeed, by Cardinal Manning, with regard to the doctrine of Papal Infallibility, that "from the Council of Florence to the Council of Trent the denial of it was confined to the opinions of a handful of men."¹ This

¹ *Œcumenical Council*, p. 42; *Quarterly Review*, vol. cxxviii. p. 18

is a bold statement with which we shall have to deal later on ; but meanwhile let me remark that his opinion was not shared by Cardinal Newman, who gave voice to the sorrow and dismay with which the proceedings of the Vatican Council were regarded by many loyal members of the Latin Church. "Why," he asked, "why should an aggressive and insolent faction be allowed to make the heart of the just sad, whom the Lord hath not made sorrowful?"¹ Those whom Cardinal Manning would describe as all the Latin divines except a mere handful, are described by Cardinal Newman as an aggressive and insolent faction. This was the faction which carried its way in 1870. They were the true successors of the hard and imperious party who in every epoch have been sooner or later victorious.

And if rumour speaks truly they are as active to-day as ever in their efforts to thwart peaceable counsels. I do not pretend to be able to penetrate the history of recent events at the Vatican, or to describe the fluctuations of intrigue and party strife which may have preceded the issue of the Pope's Encyclical ; but I should not be surprised to learn that to-day, as in years past, moderate counsels have been put forward only to be met by the violent

¹ Letter to Bishop Ullathorne, *Guardian*, April 6th, 1870.

and unyielding opposition of the Ultramontane party. It would be a welcome thing indeed were the counsels of peace, conciliation, and goodwill to prevail; and we may trace perhaps something of their influence in the gentle tone of the recent letter issued from Rome. But the Ultramontane party is strong; its past successes make it impatient of contradiction; moreover, it is hard to reverse a policy which has long prevailed. But this belongs to the future, concerning which it is not profitable to speculate. Whatever the future may be, the history of the past bears witness to the successes of the extreme party. The successes of a party are seldom widely beneficial; they are often the parents of disaster. This has been the case in the Latin Church. It would not be too much to say that every success of the Ultramontane party has been injurious to the Church. It has created fresh difficulties; it has burdened her with new dogmas; it has made her recede further and further from the simple faith of the early Church at Rome; it has added well nigh insuperable difficulties to the prospects of reunion.

The lesson of the story is one which we shall do well to take to heart. Religious zeal is a good thing, but zeal needs to be tempered with judgment and illuminated with charity. Religious zeal loses

its religious character when it loses its religious spirit. To hold our own views earnestly is good ; to hold them charitably is better and safer ; to hold them after a fashion which denounces all who differ from us is neither wise nor good. We can never too often remind ourselves that zeal is tempted to attach an exaggerated importance to certain minor and favourite truths ; it quickly becomes intolerant ; it may be tempted to exclude many saintly souls from the brotherhood of Christ. Woe to that state or Church in which fierce, heady, unscrupulous, loud-voiced partisans get the upper hand. In their day burdens too heavy to bear are bound upon men's shoulders ; the borders of the Church are narrowed ; the kinship of devoutness and saintliness is exchanged for a shibboleth ; the fetters of a party supersede the bonds of brotherhood. Nay, more, the chains of the dominant faction are declared to be the necessary and indispensable links of the Christian Church.

Do I exaggerate? It is needful, in viewing the prospects of a Reunited Christendom, to note the factors of the problem ; and in doing so, we cannot overlook the position to which the Latin Communion has been brought by the strenuous and unyielding policy of the party which has had the largest share in moulding her

form and in guiding her destinies. I have given you one or two illustrations of the way in which the extremists have triumphed. I am no friend of a habit, which has been only too common in controversy, of making your opponent worse than he is, or of charging on a Church, as such, the sins of those who, though they may pretend to speak in her name, have no real authority to do so. It is unfair to hold any communion responsible for the wild or heated utterances of every thoughtless or feverish-minded apologist. But it is both just and necessary to show, in the history of any Church, the evils which result when temperate men are silenced, and the sons of violence seize the helm of power. When Gamaliel is denounced as a Galilean, the tragedy of religion is at hand.

If, therefore, I set before you the position in which the policy of the Ultramontanes has placed the Latin Church, it is not with the view of disparaging the characters or questioning the sincerity of any members of that communion, but with the view of exhibiting as fairly as I can, the obstacles to reunion which have been needlessly created by the rashness, or ignorance, or unscrupulousness of the extremists within her bosom.

For it is idle to deny that obstacles have been created, and that the irreconcilable attitude which

has been thus forced on the Roman Church is one of the greatest difficulties in the way of reunion.

We accept indeed in all kindliness, the pleasant words which the Bishop of Rome has addressed to us. We reciprocate his wish for reunion, but it is needful to ask where we stand and where he stands. Do these words of kindness mean that the irreconcilable attitude is to be abandoned? Are we to understand that the grave obstacles to reunion will be considered by the Roman Curia with the view of their removal? Does it mean that a policy of conciliation and concession is to be initiated, or does it mean that other Churches will be received on the basis and condition of submission?

If the words are to be followed by deeds, and the obstacles are to be removed, then there is a gleam of hope; but if otherwise, we can only point out that submission is not the same thing as reunion. And further, that submission would be the admission of claims which are quite inadmissible, and which are in themselves obstacles which never ought to have been created, and the removal of which is indispensable in any scheme of reunion.

III. SOME OBSTACLES OF LATIN CREATION

It will be our duty to notice these obstacles. They are to be found in the claims which, through the action of the extremists in many ages, have been formulated, and at length made an essential part of that Church's system.

There is a claim of supremacy, and there is a claim of infallibility. We are not left in doubt as to the significance of these claims. If they were merely claims of precedence or rank, they might be treated as amiable weaknesses ; but they are claims which naturally affect the whole position of the Christian Church, and touch the internal administration and general well-being of nations.

IV. THE CLAIMS OF SUPREMACY AND INFALLIBILITY

Let me remind you of the language in which these claims are set forth, not by the heated partisans, but by the deliberate and formal, and authorised declarations of the Roman Church herself. The Douay Catechism thus defines the Church. "The Church is the Congregation of all the faithful under Jesus Christ, their invisible head, and his vicar upon earth, the Pope." The sub-

jection to the Pope upon earth is treated as an essential, not merely for those who belong to the Roman Communion, but for all, for this is what we further read in the same Catechism. "He who is not in due connexion and subordination to the Pope and General Councils, must needs be dead, and cannot be accounted a member of the Church." And the reason for this is stated with startling clearness : Such "cannot be accounted a member of the Church, since from the Pope and General Councils, under Christ, we have our spiritual life and motion, as Christians."¹

The position taken up in the Catechism is the same as that which is set forth in the Canon Law. "The Pope, by the Lord's appointment, is the successor of the blessed Apostle Peter, and holds the place of the Redeemer himself upon the earth."² "The Roman Church, by the appointment of our Lord, is the mother and mistress of all the faithful." "The Roman Pontiff bears the authority not of a mere man, but of the true God upon the earth."³ The Canon Law gives us information which shows us the scope of the authority which is here claimed. He has sole

¹ See Bp. Hopkins, *Church of Rome*, pp. 17, 18.

² *Corp. Jur. Can.* Joan Gib, tom. ii., p. 6.

³ *Church of Rome*, p. 19.

power over the union or division of dioceses, and to order the precedence of one diocese over another. He has also the right to determine the privileges which belong to his office. "Whenever there is any question concerning the privileges of the Apostolic chair, they are not to be judged by others. The Pope alone knows how to determine doubts concerning the privileges of the chief Apostolic seat."¹

It will be seen that the supremacy here claimed must in the nature of the case affect very vital matters. It touches the spiritual life of the individual: it touches the practical working of the Church. The whole system which our own Church, and the Churches in communion with us enjoy, would be revolutionised by the admission of such a supremacy. A new diocese could not be formed in a missionary district, or in a crowded English centre, except by the sanction of the Bishop of Rome. Is it possible that we could ever allow a doctrine which would require the permission of a foreign Bishop for the formation of the Sees of Wakefield and Bristol? Are we to acknowledge that the spiritual life of Englishmen and Americans, of Russians and Germans depends upon their subordination to the Bishop of Rome?

¹ *Ibid.*, p. 20.

The range of the supremacy claimed is therefore very great. It touches three-fourths of life. It touches matters intimately connected with private morals, public liberty, and national welfare. The Pope can define the limits of his own supremacy. We can judge how far, in his view, these limits extend by the language and action of Popes in the past. In 1864 Pope Pius IX. in his Encyclical condemned the doctrine that liberty of conscience and worship were the right of every man. In the papal syllabus of 1861, the same Pope condemned the doctrine that the Church may not employ force. At the same time, he condemned the statement that marriage, *si sacramentum excludatur*, has a binding force, and also the opinion that any other religion than the Roman faith may be established by the State.

The same Pope in 1873 complained of certain misrepresentations of the dogma of infallibility. It was a malicious error which declared that that dogma included the right of deposing sovereigns. But why was it a malicious error? Was it because no such power was claimed? Not at all; but only because such a power belonged to the authority of the Pope, and not to him by virtue of his infallibility. "This right," said the Pope (Pius IX., July 21, 1873), "has now and again, in critical circum-

stance, been exercised by the Pontiffs: but it has nothing to do with infallibility. Its origin was not the infallibility, but the authority of the Pope."¹

Let us turn to the claim of infallibility, and measure, if we can, its significance. The decree issued in the twenty-fifth year of his pontificate by Pius IX., declares that, when the Pope is speaking *ex cathedrâ*, his decisions in matters of faith and morals have the nature of infallibility. We naturally wish to understand what the speaking *ex cathedrâ* signifies; does this limit the range of the infallibility claimed? No: here we are confronted with the significance of the claim. The Pope, and the Pope alone, can declare when his utterances are to be taken to be *ex cathedrâ*, and when not. "The provision is," as Mr. Gladstone said, "that no document he issues shall be valid without a seal; but the seal remains under his own sole lock and key."²

But the decrees of which we speak went beyond infallibility; they claimed obedience. Whenever the Pope speaks, his decisions are binding on all men. Disobedience is at the peril of salvation. "Hæc est Catholicæ veritatis doctrina, a quâ deviare, salvâ fide atque salute, nemo potest."

¹ See *Vatican Decrees*, Right Hon. W. E. Gladstone, p. 19.

² *Vatican Decrees*, p. 35.

And this obedience is claimed not only in matters of faith and morals, but in those which belong to the discipline and government of the Church throughout the whole world.¹

But are these teachings and claims to be considered only as matters subsidiary and secondary to the great and unquestioned doctrines of faith? May we treat them as we would the amusing weaknesses of some amiable but eccentric friend? This was not the view of Cardinal Manning. "The Catholic Church cannot be silent, it cannot hold its peace; it cannot cease to preach the doctrines of Revelation, not only of the Trinity and of the Incarnation, but likewise of the Seven Sacraments, and of the Infallibility of the Church of God, and of the necessity of Unity, and of the Sovereignty, both spiritual and temporal, of the Holy See."²

Such are the claims then of the Latin Church on these two matters. She claims a complete and real supremacy; she asks that the decisions and judgments of her chief bishop shall be accepted as infallible; there is no appeal to be allowed. The dream, which Catholic-minded men in all these

¹ See *Dogmatic Constitutions*, c. iii. pp. 30-32. (Dublin, 1870).

² *Present Crisis*, p. 73; quoted in *Vatican Decrees*, p. 53.

later centuries of division have cherished, that a general council of Christendom might one day be assembled, and that the matters in dispute might be candidly considered, that primitive practice and scriptural teaching might be examined, and that some happy concordat between the Churches might be reached—this dream, so dear to many devout men in the past, must vanish away. The necessity of councils is dispensed with and their value sinks to nothing ; they have been superseded by the new theory of infallibility.

V. THESE CLAIMS HINDER REUNION

We are considering the question of Reunion. It is painful to have to speak of the matters which divide us from any body of our fellow-Christians ; in doing so I have no wish to criticise or to judge any. My only object is to point out that obstacles are put in the way of reunion by the extravagant claims which have been put forward at the bidding or through the agency of an extreme party. These claims of supremacy and infallibility, view them as we may, are obstacles in the way of reunion. They seem to me to involve as a consequence that the only union which the Latin Church, or rather that extreme section of thought which has so largely

governed her councils, can contemplate, is in the submission of all other Christian Churches to them.

But this is not reunion. There is here no brotherly intercourse, no frank discussion, no loving desire to look at the other side of the question. Here the force of the one tendency, the centripetal force in religious tendencies, is to be reckoned as the only force. And the result would be a Christianity, which at the very best would be but lame and meagre, because refusing scope to some of the most royal and legitimate tendencies of our nature.

The claims are too vast, too far reaching, too imperious, to be accepted by the 200,000,000 of Christians who are outside the Roman Communion. The Greek Church, which calls itself orthodox, would never kneel and acknowledge these claims, and what hope would there be of persuading the 40,000,000 of Protestant Christians in America to seek union on these terms? Besides, the claims cannot be justified. They are contradicted by history, they are uncatholic, they are unscriptural, they cannot be brought under the aphorism of Vincentius, they cannot plead the *semper, ubique et ab omnibus*. But here I must pause, this question is too great to enter upon to-day.

Meanwhile once more let me remind you of what we owe in our own land and in our own Church to

God's providence. He made the race of that sort which resisted extremes, because they were men to whom freedom was dear and reverence was natural, and in the days of struggle, as Bishop Coxe has said, England was not swamped in the Protestant Marsh of sect and schism. She escaped the net of the Jesuits at Trent ; she became the most Catholic Church in Christendom. "She is most precious" ; said De Maistre ; "for, like a chemical *medium*, she possesses the power of humanising natures otherwise incapable of union. On the one hand, she reaches to the Protestant ; on the other, to the Roman Catholic."¹ She holds a position which is central and unique. She enshrines in her bosom both the individualistic and the social tendencies. She can be the pioneer of reunion as no other Church can be.

¹ See *Institutes of Christian History*, Bp. Cleveland Coxe, pp. 283, 327.

ADDRESS VI

I. THE UNCATHOLICITY OF LATIN CLAIMS

IN the last address I spoke of the claims put forward by the Latin Church, and of the hindrance which such claims offer to the prospects of reunion. Of course if these claims were based on irrefragable evidence, were harmonious with the facts of history, consistent with Catholic thought, and justified by primitive and scriptural teaching, objections would lose much of their own weight and many difficulties would disappear.

But these claims cannot submit to these tests. They are inconsistent with history, they violate the principles of authority, they find no justification in primitive and scriptural teaching.

It will be my aim to make good these positions.

The claims put forward are twofold. There is
x the claim of infallibility and there is the claim of
supremacy.

II. THE LATIN COMMUNION NOT AT ONE

These two claims are indeed distinct, but they have a close connection with one another. The claim of supremacy falls short of that to infallibility, but the claim to infallibility involves that of supremacy. If infallibility be conceded, supremacy follows. On the other hand if the claim to supremacy be set aside, the claim to infallibility will hardly stand. In our investigation the evidence concerning the two claims may conveniently be treated together. But before entering more particularly on this I should wish to remind you that the claim to infallibility was not always admitted. It was proclaimed in 1870. It was proclaimed notwithstanding the protests of the best and ablest divines in the Latin Communion. It led to a schism in which the Latin Church strained to the breaking point the allegiance of some of its ablest and most devout adherents. The declaration lost her the most erudite of her divines, the most eloquent of her preachers. Neither Döllinger nor Hyacinthe would tolerate a decree which could in their judgment show no justification in history, in Catholic tradition or Scripture.

The majority of the divines and teachers submitted. Yes; they submitted. But did they receive it with acclamation? Did they heartily agree? Did they even acquiesce? They submitted. Noble souls were driven into sullen silence, they acted with the loyal reticence which sons show to a foolish father or a loquacious mother when they are too intelligent to approve, and too affectionate to show dishonour. There is a disapproving silence which is a worse condemnation than outspoken criticism or determined revolt. The insolent and aggressive faction carried the day. But the victory did more than alienate some of the brightest ornaments which their Church could boast in 1870. It served to show how completely the new Roman doctrine was at variance with the teaching and utterances of the most admittedly orthodox sons of the Roman Church in days gone by.

Let us step back two hundred years. The foremost name which the Latin Church can boast in those days is that of Bossuet. It will be said that he was a Gallican and attached to the liberties of France. It is true, but he was a bishop in communion with the Church of Rome. He was accepted as a powerful opponent of Reformed or Protestant teaching. No Roman, no Ultramontane of his day would have

dreamed of repudiating his right to speak on behalf of the Latin Church. But what is more, I do not propose to question him when he is defending Gallican liberties. I propose to quote him when he appears as the champion of Catholicism, writing with eloquence and the calm confidence of one who is quite clear as to his position against the leaders of the Reformation. He will demolish his opponents by showing that they are divided amongst themselves. He will exhibit the varieties of Protestant opinions; he will show how mutually destructive they are. Will he, in doing so, show how much happier the Roman Christian is in possessing a certain and infallible guide in the Pope, whose utterances may by divine authority settle controversies and heal divisions? On the contrary, he repudiates the idea that the Pope is infallible. It is a Protestant fiction, the reformed controversialist ought to know that it is no necessary doctrine of the Catholic Church. Here are his words, you will find them in his *Histoire des Variations*. He is combating the arguments of an opponent who has criticised the instructions he issued to the clergy, and has reproached him and his colleagues with the doctrine of the infallibility. "The controversy between us does not concern Rome, nor the infallibility of her Popes, of which the Minister

knows very well we have never made a point of faith." ¹

Was Bossuet so ignorant of the position of the Church he defended as to mistake a tenet of the Church for a calumny of its foe?

But Bossuet was a Frenchman. He may have been so saturated with Gallican views that he was incapable of understanding truly the Roman position. Well—let us assume this to have been the case—let us dismiss Bossuet, only remarking that according to the decrees of 1870 his salvation was imperilled by his refusal to recognize this doctrine as *de fide*.

We will dismiss Bossuet from the witness-box.

We can interrogate Gerson. "It is lawful by the law of nature to resist the injury and violence of a Pope." He expresses the opinion that it is, under certain circumstances, lawful to withdraw oneself from the obedience of such a raging power until the Church or a council shall provide otherwise.

And if Gerson be accounted a doubtful witness, we may hear Bellarmine. "As it is lawful to resist the Pope if he should invade our bodies, so it is lawful to resist him invading our souls

¹ Vol. iv. p. 463. (Rouen, 1782.)

or troubling the commonwealth ; and much more if he should endeavour to destroy the Church.”¹

The evidence of one who was himself a Pope will perhaps be received more favourably. Adrian VI. was Pope of Rome. Before his elevation to this high office he had been Professor of Theology at Louvain. While holding this responsible post he wrote a treatise in which he maintained that it was certainly possible for a Pope to establish a heresy by his decisions and decrees. But this was not all. To show the possibility of error might be consistent with holding the opinion that actually no error had ever so been established ; but the Professor at Louvain held more than the theoretical possibility of error among the Popes. He maintained that several Popes had been heretical. Are we to assume that the Professor at Louvain, the future Pope, was mistaken ? And if so, are we to suppose that being fallible as Professor at Louvain, he became infallible as Pope Adrian VI., and discovered his own infallibility when he was raised to the papal throne, discovering at the same time that what seemed heresy to him when he was only a professor of theology, was no heresy at all when he became Pope ? This would be a curious

¹ *De Romano Pont.* Lib. ii. cap. 29 ; Op. vol. i., p. 831. Ingoldstadt, 1601.)

conclusion. It would be a striking one when laid beside some other facts. Cajetan, whose services were rewarded with a cardinal's hat, found that a closer acquaintance with the Vatican did not raise his respect for it. Tapper, who advocated the theory of infallibility, had his eyes opened, and ceased to maintain the sanctity of the Holy See. Melchior Canus, one of the Trent theologians, whose work was a great authority among infallibilists, expressed himself after more experience thus: "He who thinks Rome can be healed knows little of her: the whole administration of the Church is there converted into a great trading business, a traffic forbidden by all laws, human, natural, and divine."¹ What are we to think of an infallibility which tramples on divine and human laws? Bishop Nausea of Vienna saw the danger of the infallibilist theory, and wrote: "It would be too perilous to make our faith dependent on the judgment of a single individual; the whole earth is greater than the city."² But it may be urged that these are only the opinions of individual men. I am ready to grant it; but they are witnesses to the facts of history. Their views may be wrong, but they are sufficiently clear to show that the

¹ See *The Pope and the Council*, quoted by Döllinger p. 379.

² *Ibid.*, p. 380.

claim of papal infallibility was not admitted in their day. They are evidence that the decree of 1870 was a new decree, and that the infallibilist theory was not regarded in their time as an essential of the faith.

But let the witnesses pass ; they are individuals, though, as I submit, individuals whose witness is credible and sufficient.

III. THE FALLIBILITY OF POPES

Let the individual witnesses go. Let the Church herself appear. It is A.D. 649. We are far back, and outside the disturbance which Protestant questions might excite. There can be no question now of the animosity of Gospellers or the misrepresentations of Reformers. The Church in the east and in the west are at one. The matter is heresy. The accused is Honorius, and Honorius is Bishop or Pope of Rome. Honorius is condemned. His heresy is admitted by all. Not a single voice is raised in his defence.

This is not the only case. We go back three hundred years. Liberius is Pope. Liberius is charged with heresy. The voice of condemnation is vigorous and unhesitating. "Anathema to thee, Liberius !" is the cry of the orthodox bishops. One

of the voices is the voice of Hilary of Poitiers. These men know nothing of the infallibility of the Pope. This apostasy of Liberius sufficed, says Döllinger, "through the whole of the Middle Ages, for a proof that Popes could fall into heresy as well as other people."¹

Earlier than this we find Hippolytus exposing the errors of the Bishop of Rome. Hippolytus was canonised by the Pope of later times ; but it was before the discovery of the treatises in which the saint expatiated on the heresies of his predecessor.

Here are three several Popes convicted of error. It is however only fair to say that the dogma of infallibility is expounded by the divines of the Roman Church (for instance, by Cardinal Manning), as not claiming personal infallibility for the Pope, but only the special, official charisma which enables him when exercising his office to keep free from error. The illustrations given are cases like that of Balaam, where an undoubted gift of prophecy co-existed with grievous lapse into error and fault. We are unwilling to misrepresent, but I confess to being still puzzled ; for when we bring this claim of infallibility within the limits of the official charisma spoken of, we may expect that when

¹ *The Pope and the Council*, p. 68.

the Pope is exercising his special and official gifts, he will be preserved from error. He will at any rate not mislead the Church of God. But that is just what the heretical Popes have done. Cardinal Manning seems to hint, if I understand him rightly, that Honorius failed because he failed to exercise this priceless gift. His fault was the fault of a man who lacked the courage to use the gift which was indubitably his, and the use of which might have saved the Church from error. But if this be true, then this gift is one which may at times be suspended, and when it is so suspended the Pope may fall into heresy. However the matter may be explained, it seems that the gift did not prevent some Popes lapsing into error.

IV. WAS SUCH DOCTRINE HELD BY THE CHURCH?

Thus far we have seen that the claim of infallibility was denied by some of the ablest divines of the Roman Church in past days, and that the facts of the past appeared to justify those who maintained that Popes might lapse and had lapsed into heresy. But it is asserted that the declaration of the dogma of infallibility was not the promulgation of a new dogma, but merely the definition of a

doctrine which had always been held by the Catholic Church.

It is admitted by Cardinal Manning that there were some who resisted the idea of infallibility ; but they are not allowed by him to give evidence as witnesses to the view held by the Church in their day ; they are dismissed as those who had always been malcontents, and upon whom the yoke of papal authority had sat uneasily. But it might be lawful to dissent from this view. It is not the case that the Ultramontanes in the days of Bossuet had reached the point of supporting the doctrine of infallibility ; for the “celebrated André Duval,” as Bossuet calls him, a Doctor of the Sorbonne, was intrusted by the Ultramontanes with the defence of their cause. And what are Dr. A. Duval’s views on this subject ? He gave it as his opinion that “to deny the doctrine of papal infallibility was not absolutely contrary to the faith, and that those who put the Council above the Pope could not be held worthy of any censure, nor guilty of heresy, error, or even of temerity.”¹

But it is argued that the doctrine of infallibility was an article of faith, though not of defined faith, held by the bulk of the Catholic Church.

¹ *Hist. des Variations*, vol. iii. p. 247.

We must therefore ask—Was this doctrine known to the Catholic Church?

And here let me call your attention to one point which it is needful to keep in mind. The doctrine of infallibility as decreed in 1870 is *not* that the Pope when speaking as the mouthpiece of an œcumenical council is to be regarded as infallible, but that the Pope is so when speaking *ex cathedrâ*—"The doctrinal declarations of the Pontiff are infallible in and of themselves, and not from the consent of the Church."¹ I am quoting Cardinal Manning's explication. He tells us that the words of the decree on this point are taken textually from the Four Articles of 1682, so long the aversion of the extremists at Rome. The words, in short, were designed to express the condemnation of the Gallican and the approval of the Ultramontane doctrines. With the adoption of these words the last remnant of the old Gallican position formally disappeared, and yet Cardinal Manning could flout the men who lamented that with the Vatican Council the hope that France would ever possess a national Church had vanished.

The question to be asked now becomes clear. We are to ask whether the doctrine that the Pope

¹ "True Story of the Vatican Council," *Nineteenth Century*, vol. i. p. 800.

was infallible when speaking *ex cathedrâ* and not from the consent of the Church, was a doctrine accepted by Catholic Christendom.

Cardinal Manning was quite sure that it was. He declared that so sure were the members of the Vatican Council on the subject that the question whether the doctrine was a true one was never discussed in the council nor proposed to it.¹ According to his view, nobody in the council doubted it. The only doubt felt was as to the expediency of defining the doctrine or of defining it at that time.

The opinion of those who desired to have the doctrine defined is stated as follows:—

“The universal and constant tradition of the Church, as seen both in facts and in the teaching of the fathers, as well as in the manner of acting and speaking adopted by many Councils, some of which were Œcumenical, teaches us that the judgments of the Roman Pontiff in matters of faith and morals are irreformable.”²

It will be observed that there is a certain cautious hesitation about these words; they read like a statement made by one who felt that he was not treading on safe ground. The constant and uni-

¹ *Nineteenth Century*, vol. i. p. 486.

² Cardinal Manning, *Nineteenth Century*, vol. i. p. 493.

versal tradition finds evidence in many councils—not in all—and even of these “many councils” only some were “œcumenical.” There is a prudent restriction here. It might be inconvenient to ask in how many œcumenical councils the manner of acting and speaking showed that this doctrine of infallibility was held? It is certainly important to know how many councils can fairly be reckoned “œcumenical.” And here we may remind ourselves that no council can claim to be œcumenical which does not embrace representatives of the whole Christian Church. We cannot, for instance, reckon as such any council in which the Greek Church has no representative. Councils held within the limits of the Latin Communion and attended only by members of the Roman Church may be synods or provincial councils or patriarchal councils or whatever they please, but œcumenical councils they certainly are not, any more than a meeting of the Imperial Federation League attended by representatives from our colonies is a congress of nations.

With this in mind we cannot reckon more than six or seven General Councils. It will be allowed that if any are to be reckoned as Œcumenical these must be. Was any theory of papal infallibility known to these Councils?

It is at this point that we may conveniently

consider together the claims of infallibility and supremacy. What then is the evidence on behalf of the constant tradition of supremacy and infallibility?

At the Council of Ferrara-Florence efforts were made to bring the Eastern Church under the jurisdiction of Rome. The representatives of the Greek Church yielded more than they approved, and as soon as they returned home, they repudiated the primacy or supremacy which they seemed to allow in the declaration which they had signed. This declaration, however, they did not sign, hard pressed as they were, till it had been drawn up in a form which seemed to them to safeguard the rights of the Catholic Church. There has been some dispute respecting the wording of the declaration which the Greeks signed at this time. The version which Cardinal Manning relied on was the Latin version as represented by four or five old MSS. According to these, the Greeks seem to have allowed that the claims of Rome for supremacy were according to ancient Church use and law. But this was precisely what the Greeks were not likely to allow. The declaration which they signed and thought they signed, was one which conceded to the Pope supremacy or primacy, but limited by the ancient

customs or laws. Cardinal Manning pleaded that the versions he consulted were clearly in support of his view. But he omitted to say that the declaration was drafted first in Greek, and that the Latin versions which he quoted do not give an accurate rendering of the Greek original.

Whether this Council of Florence is to be accounted Œcumenical or not, it is certain that the Greeks never intended to concede such a supremacy as the Ultramontanes now claim for Rome. And even such a primacy as they did seem to allow was yielded under circumstances of pressure which went near to being coercion, and was repudiated at the earliest opportunity and continues to be repudiated by the Greek Church to the present hour.

The Greeks rightly took their stand upon ancient law or Catholic customs. The judgment of councils admittedly œcumenical was clear and pertinent.

For the early councils had laid down principles which were fatal to extravagant claims. The rights of churches, bishops, and metropolitans were recognised clearly. The limits of jurisdiction were defined.

Thus the sixth canon of the Council of Nice runs: "Let the ancient custom prevail in Egypt,

Libya, and Pentapolis, so that the Bishop of Alexandria have authority over all these, since this is customary also to the Bishop of Rome. In like manner, also, as regards Antioch, and in all the other provinces, let the Churches preserve their privileges. This is altogether certain, that if any one become a bishop without the consent of the metropolitan, the Great Synod has determined that he ought not to be a bishop.”¹

“At the Council of Chalcedon, an attempt,” writes Mr. Perceval, “was made on the part of the representative of the Bishop of Rome to substitute a spurious edition of this canon, beginning thus,— ‘The Church of Rome always had the primacy,’ &c. But the attempt was defeated at the time by a copy of the canon belonging to the Archdeacon of Constantinople; and none of the Greek codes countenanced it (the Roman reading); so that it has been universally rejected. Even if the reading had been genuine, it would have implied no more than a primacy of rank, which was never denied to the See of the chief city of the Roman Empire. In the very ancient manuscript collection of the canons belonging to Justel, this disputed canon stands thus, and plainly points out the

¹ Council of Nice, canon vi. Wilkins’s *Concilia*, tom. i. p. 342 (Paris, 1535).

extent of the Roman jurisdiction, and the equality of authority which all other metropolitans at that time enjoyed with him.

“De primatu Ecclesiæ Romanæ, *vel aliarum civitatum Episcopis*. Antiqui moris est ut *urbis Romæ Episcopus habeat principatum, ut suburbicaria loca et omnem provinciam sua sollicitudine gubernet*; quæ verò apud Egyptum sunt, Alexandriæ Episcopus omnium habeat sollicitudinem: similiter autem et circa Antiochum: *et in cæteris provinciis privilegia propria servantur Metropolitanis Ecclesiis, &c.*” (*Bibl. Jur. Can. Vet.*, Paris 1661, vol i. p. 284).¹

And the limits of the jurisdiction of the Bishop of Rome are described by Ruffinus as being over the suburbicarian Churches. These suburbicarian Churches were the Churches of Middle and Southern Italy, Sicily, Sardinia, and Corsica. The sees of Milan, Ravenna, and Aquileia were not included, nor were these sees dependent on the Bishop of Rome for 600 years after Christ.

The question of rank as well as jurisdiction was taken notice of by councils. Thus in the 3rd canon of the Council of Constantinople (A.D. 381): “Let the Bishop of Constantinople have

¹ See Perceval, *On the Roman Schism*, pp. 48, 49.

rank next after the Bishop of Rome, for Constantinople is New Rome.”¹ And the high rank thus given to the Bishop of Rome was conceded for the most natural of all reasons. The reason is given in Canon XXVIII. of Chalcedon.

“For the Fathers, with reason, gave precedence to the throne of Old Rome, because it was the imperial city : and the 150 bishops beloved of God, moved by the same consideration, awarded equal precedence to the most holy throne of New Rome, reasonably judging that a city which is honoured with the government and senate, should enjoy equal rank with the ancient Queen Rome ; and, like her, be magnified in ecclesiastical matters, having the second place after her.”²

No appeal to Rome was deemed necessary. The appeal in cases of dispute was to be to the exarch or the emperor. Thus Canon IX., Chalcedon : “If a bishop or a clergyman have a dispute with the Metropolitan of the province, let him have access either to the Exarch of the diocese, or to the throne of the Imperial Constantinople, and let it be there judged.”³

The ancient councils afford no countenance to the claims of infallibility or supremacy. The

¹ Wilkins's *Concilia*, tom. i. p. 661.

² *Ibid.*, tom. iii. pp. 446-7.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 441.

very theory of supremacy is everywhere contradicted.

V. THE TESTIMONY OF THE FATHERS

We are referred to the ancient fathers. We are willing to interrogate them.

Tertullian has no idea of this supremacy of Rome, for when he counsels the heretics, he advises them to seek the guidance, not of Rome, but of the nearest Apostolic Church. "Come then," he says, "you who wish to exercise your curiosity better in the concerns of your salvation, go through the Apostolic Churches, amongst which the very seats of the Apostle continue in their places, and their original epistles are recited, sounding forth the voice, and representing the countenance of each one. Is Achaia near you? You have Corinth. If you are not far from Macedonia, you have Philippi, you have Thessalonica. If you cannot go throughout Asia, you have Ephesus; but if you are convenient to Italy, you have Rome, whence authority for us is nigh at hand."¹

The teaching of Cyprian respecting the govern-

¹ *De Prescript. Heret.*, §. xxxvi. tom. i. p. 338 (Rothomagi, 1662).

ment of the Church is well known and clear. "By Christ," he says, "there is one Church through the whole world divided in many members ; for the episcopate is one, diffused by the harmonious host of many bishops, and he [Novatian], notwithstanding the tradition of God, notwithstanding the connected and every where conjoined unity of the catholic Church attempts to form a human Church."¹ "The episcopate," he says, "is but one, of which a part is held by each bishop, with an interest in the whole."² He gives no hint, you will observe (though it would be manifestly obvious to do so), of any supremacy given to Rome. But when he writes to the Bishop of Rome, he gives him no title of supremacy ; he is his "colleague," his "fellow-bishop," his "brother." When he mentions the precedence which Rome has over Carthage, he does not ground it upon any rule or supposed claim of supremacy, but solely on the relative sizes of the two cities.

"Plainly," he says, "on account of its magnitude, Rome ought to precede Carthage."³ It is a precedence of rank, of size, of dignity, but not of authority, or of supremacy. Such a claim would

¹ *Ad Antonian. Epist.* tom. ii. p. 112 (Ox. 1682).

² *De Unitat. Eccles.* tom. i. p. 108 (Ox. 1682).

³ *Ad Cornelium Epist.* tom. ii. p. 97 (Ox. 1682).

in his view have constituted an act of tyranny, "since," he declares, "every Bishop exercises the free choice of his own will in the administration of the Church, having to render an account of his acts to the Lord."¹

From Cyprian let us turn to St. Augustine, an authority who is constantly claimed on behalf of the Roman Church. St. Augustine is the greatest of the Latin fathers; he has written more on questions of Church unity and Church authority than all the other fathers. He was held in esteem by one of the Popes, Pelagius I.; and Pelagius praised Augustine for "being mindful of the divine doctrine which places the foundation of the Church in the Apostolical *Sees*, and teaching that they are schismatics who separate themselves from the communion of these Apostolical *Sees*."² In the mind of Pelagius, as of Augustine, there was more than one Apostolical See; and the foundation of the faith belonged to no one of them, but to all. Neither Augustine nor Pelagius know anything of an exclusive privilege belonging to Rome. Alexandria, Antioch, and Jerusalem, as well as Rome, were Apostolical Sees, and the

¹ *Ad Steph. Epist. Tom. ii. p. 198* (Ox. 1682).

² Mansi, *Concil. ix.*, 716; quoted by Döllinger, *The Pope and the Council*, p. 89.

rights of all Apostolical Sees were the same and equal.

VI. THE ARGUMENT FROM SILENCE

The silence of the Fathers on this matter of Roman supremacy supplies negative evidence against it. "In the writings of the Greek doctors," says Dr. Döllinger, "Eusebius, St. Athanasius, St. Basil the Great, the two Gregories, and St. Epiphanius, there is not one word of any prerogatives of the Roman Bishop. The most copious of the Greek fathers, St. Chrysostom, is wholly silent on the subject, and so are the two Cyrils; equally silent are the Latins, Hilary, Pacian, Zeno, Lucifer, Sulpicius, and St. Ambrose."¹ One phrase from St. Basil the Great is worth quoting. He expresses his contempt for the writing of the Popes: "Those insolent and puffed up Occidentals, who would only sanction false doctrine." He would not receive their letters if they fell from heaven.²

Clement, too, writing from Rome, makes no such claim. His epistle is that of a brother writing in love to brothers and equals in Christ.

¹ Döllinger, *The Pope and the Council*, pp. 87-8.

² *Opp.* iii. 301. (*Ed. Bened.*); *Epp.* 239 and 214; quoted by Döllinger, *The Pope and the Council*, p. 87.

"Of the seven letters bearing the name of Ignatius, six are addressed to Asia Minor, the remaining one to Rome. The six are full of exhortations urging obedience to the bishops ; the letter to Rome is entirely free from any such command." Indeed, if Ignatius had not incidentally mentioned himself as "the Bishop" the letter to Rome would have contained no allusion to the episcopal office. "It is addressed to the Church of Rome. It assigns to this Church a pre-eminence of rank as well as of love. . . . it is remarkable that not a word is said about the Roman bishop." The omission is startling, but accords with other information from trustworthy sources. The development of episcopacy in Asia Minor was mature at this time, "the earliest notices of the Church in Rome point in the opposite direction. In the epistle of Clement which was written a few years before these Ignatian letters purport to be penned, there is no mention of the Bishop. The letter is written in the name of the Church ; it speaks with the authority of the Church, . . . and pleads the authority, not of the chief minister, but of the whole body."¹

Episcopal government was matured as a safeguard against heresy and schism. Rome at this time was remarkably free from such

¹ See Lightfoot, *Epistles of St. Ignatius*, vol. i. pp. 397-8.

troubles, and remained so until the middle of the second century. In the latter half of the second century the Church of Rome is singled out by Hegesippus and Irenæus for emphatic mention in this very connection. "Much mention of the Church of Rome and yet no mention of the Bishop of Rome—this would be an inexplicable anomaly, a stark anachronism in their age."¹

But though Ignatius does not refer to the Bishop of Rome, he is cited as a witness to the supremacy of the Church of Rome. He greets (it is said) the Roman Church as a Church which had special authority and supremacy. It will be well to examine the words which are relied on. Ignatius speaks of the Church :

“ἦτις καὶ προκάθηται ἐν τόπῳ χωρίου Ῥωμαίων,”

What are we to understand by these words? In Bishop Lightfoot's judgment, "they probably describe the limits over which the supremacy or jurisdiction extends. (*cf.* Tert. *De Praescr.* 36), "percurrere ecclesias apostolicas apud quas ipsæ adhuc cathedræ apostolorum *suis locis præsident.*" In this case it might be thought that there was a reference more especially to the presidency of the Roman see over the suburbicarian bishops, who formed a sort of college

¹ Lightfoot, *Epistles of St. Ignatius*, vol. i., p. 399.

under the bishop of Rome as their head—a constitution out of which the later college of Cardinals grew. But, not to mention that the presidency is here assigned not to the Roman bishop but to the Roman Church, such a reference would probably be a great anachronism. Though some have seen distinct traces of this relation between the Bishop of Rome and the suburbicarian sees at least as early as the beginning of the third century, yet there is really no evidence of such a constitution until a very much later date, while many facts point in an opposite direction.

The *τόπος χωρίου Ῥωμαίων* therefore will have a looser signification, denoting generally 'the country or district of the Romans,' and the Church of Rome itself is so entitled, as the principal church in this region, just as the Church of Jerusalem might be said *προκαθῆσθαι ἐν τόπῳ χωρίου Ἰουδαίων*.

On the other hand it might be urged that *ἐν τόπῳ κ.τ.λ.* describes not the range of the supremacy but the locality of the supreme power itself. In this case *προκάθεται* would be used absolutely of a certain precedence assigned to the Church of Rome, as situated in the metropolis of the empire and the world, over the other churches of Christendom. . . . But, if this were the meaning, it is difficult to see

why Ignatius should write *ἐν τόπῳ χωρίου Ῥωμαίων* in place of *ἐν Ῥώμῃ*, which alone would be natural to describe merely the locality. The idea of the 'cathedra Petri' therefore has no place here."¹ Such is, in brief, Bishop Lightfoot's exposition of the passage. Du Pin candidly admits that the claim of universal authority was not made on behalf of the Bishop of Rome. On the contrary he tells us that the title of Universal Patriarch was refused, lest by giving something peculiar to one bishop only, they should take away the rights which belonged to all the bishops.²

But from the judgment of councils and the silence of the Fathers on this matter of supremacy we are told to turn to other evidence. There are the Decretals. Yes, there are the Decretals of which the Roman Catholic writer, whose learned book on the Councils is so well known, says: "They are so deformed in the eyes of all discerning men, that no art, no paint, whether white or red, can disguise them."³ No one will rely on forgeries which serve only to make emphatic the silence of more than a thousand years.

"For thirteen centuries," says Döllinger, "an

¹ Lightfoot, *Epistles of St. Ignatius*, vol. ii. pp. 190-91.

² Du Pin, vol i. p. 569. (Dublin, 1723.)

³ Labbe, quoted by Bp. Hopkins, *Church of Rome*, p. 50.

incomprehensible silence on this fundamental article reigned throughout the whole Church and her literature.”¹

VII. THE POSITION OF BISHOPS OF ROME IN CONTROVERSIES

The Roman bishops took no leading part in the great controversial questions which agitated those early days. Gnostic sects, Montanists, Chiliasts arose in the early Church, but no decree was issued from the Bishop of Rome. The controversy about Christ, which is associated with the name of Paul of Samosata, was the occasion of the assembling of other councils, but no Pope took part in any of them.

But there were three controversies in which the Bishop of Rome did intervene—the controversy about Easter, about heretical baptism, and that about penance. But when they intervened they did not succeed. The other Churches maintained, in spite of the Bishops of Rome, their own independent usages. At the Council of 381 the Church of Rome was not even represented.

The African bishops resented and rejected a claim on the part of the Pope to appoint judges

¹ *The Pope and the Council*, p. 64.

for the bishop, assisted by a Roman legate to deal with some difficult cases. "We are resolved," said these African bishops, "not to admit this arrogant claim."

The Senate of Paris in 824 spoke of the absurdity of Pope Hadrian, who had, they said, "commanded heretical worship of images."¹

VIII. THE ARGUMENT FROM THE BIBLE.

There are three passages of Scripture which are adduced in favour of Papal claims. One is, of course, the famous passage in Matt. xvi. 18, 19. Another is the passage St. John xxi. 15-23, in which we have the story of that touching scene in which the Risen Lord thrice questions St. Peter's love. This latter passage has no possible bearing on the subject of Papal supremacy. St. Peter had fallen. He had denied his Lord. His heart was sad with the misgivings and sorrow which his remembrance of his own cowardice called forth. Our Lord is mindful of His disciple's doubts and self-reproaches; and He takes this early opportunity of restoring His fallen follower with words which probe his sincerity and yet lovingly reveal to him

¹ See *The Pope and the Council*, pp. 64, 79.

the way of future usefulness. It is only by reading into the passage entirely irrelevant ideas that it can be brought into this controversy at all.

The same remarks apply to the third passage relied upon in St. Luke xxii. 32, "I have prayed for thee that thy faith fail not; and when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren." Only an afterthought or the exigencies of controversy could find in this passage matter bearing upon the supremacy of Roman Bishops. Its reference to St. Peter's fall, and restoration is obvious; and that our Lord should point out the duty of turning these experiences into helps for others is quite in harmony with His wont. But because Simon Peter was bidden to use the experiences gained in humiliation for the good of others it does not follow that Bishops of Rome have possessed supremacy or infallibility.

With the passage in St. Matthew, the case is different; for in this our Lord speaks of His Church, its building and its enduring character. He glances into the future, and He speaks of the qualities and conditions which are indispensable for the permanence of His Church. Is there anything in this passage which throws light upon the controversy about Papal claims?

1. It may be noted that whatever be the

significance of the passage with regard to St. Peter, it is a long way from St. Peter to the Bishops of Rome. Even were we to grant that the words conferred official pre-eminence upon St. Peter, this would not prove, or in any way justify, the claims made by the Bishops of Rome. This is no idle statement; for if the words conveyed any gift, power, or government to the Bishops of Rome as successors of Peter, such a meaning ought at least to have been clear to some, at any rate, of the Fathers who commented on the passage. But what is the fact? "Of all the Fathers who interpret these passages (Matt. xvi. 18, John xxi. 15) *not a single one applies them to the Roman Bishops as Peter's successors.*"¹

2. Similar power was conferred on all the Apostles. And indeed the best commentary on the words of our Lord to St. Peter is found in the New Testament itself; for there we may perceive that the Apostles themselves never conceived that any supremacy was given to St. Peter. He is foremost to speak on the day of Pentecost (Acts ii.), but he holds no foremost place in the Council at Jerusalem. St. James, if any, is foremost there; and indeed delivers his decision as one who closes a discussion (Acts xv. 19). In the Acts we find

¹ Döllinger, *Pope and Council*, p. 91.

no supremacy. We find brotherly action and brotherly co-operation. And this is what we might have expected of disciples of our Lord ; for He forbade lordship. "It shall not be so among you" (Matt. xx. 26). "All ye are brethren" (Matt. xxiii. 8). Indeed, the very strife which arose among them, which of them should be the greatest (Luke xxii. 24), shows how far from their minds was any idea of St. Peter's supremacy ; for how could such a question have arisen if our Lord Himself had settled the matter beforehand ?

Hence, as far as the passage in St. Matthew's Gospel is concerned we may say—If the words confer right of supreme government on Simon Peter (which is more than doubtful), and if the rights so conferred upon St. Peter descend to his successors (which must needs be proved), and if the Bishops of Rome and they alone are successors of St. Peter (which will be hard to prove), then the advocates of the supremacy of Rome may point to a metaphor on which to base Papal claims. But important matters may not thus rest upon the precarious support of contested passages. We need something stouter than the thin thread of a doubtful text. Claims vast and far-reaching as these need solid arguments or self-evidencing truth.

IX. CONCLUSION.

But when neither in the Bible, nor in the Fathers and Councils we can find their justification we may reasonably distrust these attempts to find new foundations for faith. We may be content to hold with St. Paul that Christ Himself is the only foundation, and to believe with Origen that as after Christ we are called Christians, so, seeing that He is our rock, even the rock of our salvation, we too as stones hewn out of that rock may be rocklike, strong and steadfast amid all winds that blow.

ADDRESS VII

I. CONDITIONS OF REUNION

I HAVE dwelt upon the claims to supremacy and infallibility advanced on behalf of the Bishop of Rome. I have endeavoured to show that these claims were not based on history, fact, or on Catholic custom. It is, I think, incontrovertible that such claims were unknown to the early Church. The truly œcumenical councils bear witness against them, and the language of the best of the fathers is inconsistent with them.

The question, however, cannot be dismissed by a mere appeal to history. It may be urged that Christendom would be doomed to stagnation if, as time moved forward and changed conditions of life and custom arose, the Church should be so bound by the decisions of the past that it could not develop its creed in harmony with fresh needs as they arose. The creeds drawn up at Nice and Constantinople were drawn to meet a particular condition

of affairs. They were designed to meet the Arianism which was rampant. They bear the marks of the age in which they were framed, and they attest therefore, the principle that the Church cannot limit her creed by what has passed, but must adjust it to new conditions, and take cognizance of fresh forms of error. It cannot have been the intention of any council to bind down those who came after them by a creed which was clearly the outcome of urgent and perhaps temporary circumstances.

Now there are two points involved in this plea. One is this : that the Church has right and authority to decree fresh doctrines as need shall require. The other is that in formulating the early creeds the Church had no intention of binding their successors or prohibiting the issue of additional doctrinal statements. The first is a question of right ; the second is a question of fact.

But, further, it will be quite clear that even if we allowed both these positions, *i.e.*, if we admitted that the early Church did not intend their creeds to be final or restrictive, and also that the Church had a right to issue fresh dogmas, there would still be a question to determine, *viz.*, what would constitute the lawful authority within the Church to take action and issue the needful doctrine. And therefore the action of any particular Church in the

matter would still be open to question. We should still have to ask whether the issue of any new doctrine was within the authority of any particular communion, or whether such an action would require the consent of the universal Church.

If therefore we were to hold that the early councils left the later Church free, we should not necessarily justify a Church which on its own responsibility declares certain dogmas to be essential parts of the Christian revelation. The right of particular Churches to add fresh doctrines will hardly be admitted, since if this were so, there would be constant risk of fresh reasons for division. The area of indispensable truth would be continually enlarged, and enlarged in different directions by different Churches. I think it will be allowed, that if additions to essential faith are to be made, they should only be made with the assent of united Christendom. But this assent seems to be impossible without the reunion of Christendom. A Church simply evades the difficulty by declaring itself to be the only true Catholic and Universal Church. This is like the young lady's method when she justifies her action by saying "Everybody does it," and explains everybody by "everybody who is anybody." But the part

is not equal to the whole, however much giddiness and prejudice may wish to make it so.

Impatience often lies at the root of rough and ready modes of settlement. The best and most Catholic-minded of Christians have recommended a better course. When difficulties and divisions hindered the assembling of a truly General Council it was the part of faith and patience to wait, and scrupulously avoid the promulgation of hasty definitions or the expression of dogmatic opinions till happier days should come and united counsel should be possible. And this indeed seems ever the wiser course. At any rate the declaration of new doctrines, as essential to faith on the part of any particular Church, seems to me to be rash, and certainly tends to hinder the reunion of the brotherhood of Christ.

We may now turn to the two questions of which I have spoken.

Did the early Church intend to issue creeds which were to be final?

Has the Church the right to formulate new doctrines to meet changed conditions and fresh errors?

These are the questions which we must now consider.

II. WAS THE CREED FINAL?

Did the early councils consider that the creed which they agreed upon was to be a final and sufficient symbol of faith?

There is one important canon which bears upon this question. It is a decree of the Council of Ephesus. This council was held in A.D. 438. It is admitted on all sides to be a genuine Council. Its judgment "was at once approved by the whole western Church, and by far the greater part of the east; and was subsequently confirmed by the œcumenical council of Chalcedon, consisting of 630 bishops. Even John of Antioch, and the eastern bishops, very soon acknowledged it. It has ever been regarded by every branch of the true Church as œcumenical."¹

The council met by command of the Emperor Theodosius. It consisted of 200 bishops. The purpose of the council was to consider the teaching of Nestorius. The council condemned the doctrine of Nestorius. They passed also the remarkable decree to which I have referred.

"The Holy Synod determined that it should not be lawful for any one to set forth, write, or com-

¹ Landon, *Manual of Councils*, p. 235.

pose any other creed than that which was determined by the holy fathers who assembled at Nice in the Holy Ghost; and that if any shall dare to compose any other creed, or adduce or present it to those who are willing to be converted to the knowledge of the truth, either from heathenism and Judaism, or any heresy whatsoever; such persons, if bishops, shall be deprived of their episcopal office, if clergy, of the clerical office and if laymen shall be excommunicate."

Now this decree is explicit enough; it forbids the making of new creeds. But it may be urged that this decree is aimed at the rashness or presumption of individuals who might seek to promulgate new doctrines, and that it by no means debars the Church from formulating fresh dogmas. It does certainly forbid individual bishop, clergyman, and layman making new creeds; and in doing so, it surely includes the action of any particular Church. Even if the decree does not hinder the action of any future œcumenical council, it surely censures the action of any body or assembly of men short of a general council.

And history shows us that it was largely understood as a positive and final prohibition. Everywhere we meet with a sensitive expression of reluctance to add anything to the universally

admitted Catholic Creed. The Nicene Fathers, when adopting the enlarged creed which bears their name, disclaimed the intention of adding to the creed. May we not interpret this decree of the Council of Ephesus in the light of this disclaimer? Is it not probable that the wise and jealous conservatism, which saw in novel opinions the possibility of error, passed this decree to insure that the faith which was enshrined in the creed should be kept in its simplicity and its fulness?

And we have evidence that this spirit was recognised.

In 1439 the Council of Ferrara-Florence met. It was a council from which much was hoped. The Greek Emperor John Palæologus indulged the laudable dream of uniting the East and the West. He showed his earnestness by attending the council. He set forth with much pomp and circumstance. The patriarch Joseph, accompanied by dignitaries of St. Sophia, Mark the Archbishop of Ephesus, with twenty-one bishops, besides other ecclesiastics, made up a train of some seven hundred. The precious vessels of St. Sophia were carried with them. The journey was made in galleys furnished by the Pope. But seventy-seven days of difficult and painful navigation elapsed before the stately procession arrived at Venice.

When at length the Greeks and Latins met in conference, the discussion of the subjects in dispute was conducted mainly by specially skilled theologians. The subject of the *Filioque* clause in the Nicene or Constantinopolitan creed was debated. And what was the rival position of the two parties on this matter? The Latins desired to settle the question by debating whether there was ground for saying that the Holy Spirit proceeded from the Son as well as from the Father. They stood upon the truth of the doctrine contained in the *Filioque*. The Greeks, however, insisted that the *Filioque* was an addition, and that additions to the creed had been forbidden by the decree of an Œcumenical Council. In other words, they defended their position by the decree of the Council of Ephesus, which I have quoted. The Latins expressed their readiness to expunge the words if they could be shown to express an unfounded doctrine. The Greeks argued that however true the words might be they constituted an addition to the creed, and that any addition was unlawful.

I am not now considering whether the Greeks were right in the attitude they took up; I am only showing that the decree of Ephesus was appealed to on this grave occasion as containing a prohibition of all additions to the creed. Some of

our own ablest and most catholic-minded divines seem to have agreed with this view of the matter. Archbishop Bramhall in his controversy with M. de la Milière, says, "We retain the same Creed to a word, and in the same sense, by which all the primitive Fathers were saved ; which they held to be so sufficient, that in a general Council they did forbid all persons (under pain of deposition to Bishops and clerks, and anathematisation to laymen) to compose or obtrude any other upon any persons converted from Paganism or Judaism."¹

Again, in the same treatise, he argues with his Romanist antagonist that the Church of Rome has violated the decree of the Council of Ephesus by the new creed of Pope Pius IV. "Suffer us to enjoy the same Creed," he says, "the primitive Fathers did, 'which none will say to have been insufficient, except they be mad,' as was alleged by the Greeks in the Council of Florence. You have violated this canon, you have obtruded a new Creed upon Christendom ; new, I say, not in words only, but in sense also."² A man of a very different school of thought, Bishop Burnet, appears to have agreed with Archbishop Bramhall. In his time conferences tending towards home

¹ Works, vol. ii. p. 391. Anglo-Catholic Library.

² *Ibid.* vol. i. p. 25.

reunion were held. Among other questions the Athanasian Creed, the use of which was a stumbling block to many, was discussed. Bishop Burnet urged that the use of the creed was contrary to the Ephesian canon. And Mr. Perceval, who chivalrously rebuked those who used violent and intemperate language against the Church of Rome, takes the same view of the force of the decree. "It is clear," he says, "from this" (*i.e.*, the Ephesian decree, which he has quoted) "that in requiring assent to the creed of Pope Pius, as a term of communion, the Church of Rome is schismatically opposing itself to a decree of the Catholic Church."¹

I must not linger on this point ; but I think that I have said enough to show that in the view of a large number of experts, and of an important portion of Christendom, the decree of the Council of Ephesus is understood to prohibit additions to the creed. And it may, I think, certainly be maintained that no authority less than that of an œcumenical council has a right to rescind this decree, or to insist that any article which is outside the old Nicene Creed is essential to salvation.

¹ Perceval, *On the Roman Schism*, p. 51.

III. THE RIGHT TO MAKE NEW CREEDS.

The next question before us is with regard to the right of the Church to formulate new articles of belief to meet fresh emergencies as they arise.

Now what I have said respecting the Ephesian decree touches this question. It will be clear that in the judgment of some this decree takes away the right to make additions.

But still it may be asked: By what right do we take a fixed period and say here is the limit of our faith? What wisdom is there in saying that the way of religious truth is to be considered as settled at some particular epoch? If we believe in the living God, must we not believe that as the ages come with their particular needs He has a message for them? Was not he right and wise who said, "I will not believe that God has no greater revelation for men, or that the fathers of the old world locked the gate of revelation and threw away the key"? And more, it may be urged, such an attempt is vain. We cannot arrest the increasing tide of knowledge. It is only the overweening pride of ignorance which says to the ocean or to the progress of knowledge, "Hitherto shalt thou come and no farther; and here shall thy

proud waves be stayed." The resistless force of developing knowledge will sweep away contemptuously all such arbitrary and artificial barriers.

And if this be the case, must we not look for progressive revelation and a developing creed? And to that extent is not the argument from what is primitive beside the mark? Whatever value its witness may be to what was believed then, it is of little avail to teach or to limit what may fitly be believed now. And yet, further, may it not be urged that the Scriptures themselves justify this view; for do we not read that our Lord Himself promised the Holy Spirit, a "Comforter," who should lead His Church into all truth? May we not, therefore, expect that the Spirit should continue to guide the Church in the evolution of articles of faith fitted to the changing needs of the ages?

There is no doubt an element of truth in this contention. It is undoubtedly true that human knowledge is progressive, and that as long as this is the case there must be fresh truth brought to man. Every age brings new conquests from the realm of the unknown. But it needs also to be remembered that there is a sense in which truth is never new. It has been said, "If it is new, it is not true. If it is true, it is not new." And this aspect of the matter contains an important truth.

We are constantly confusing between the age of truth, as we know it, and the age of truth, as it is in itself. Nothing can be discovered except what was true before it was discovered. Gravity was not a new law, though it was a new discovery. This means that what is true to-day must have been true always, if it is truth in the sense of a law or principle, and not of a mere incident. It follows from this that whatever be the nature of progressive knowledge or progressive revelation, it must be able to stand the test of the question, Was it always true? Is it an abiding principle, as true a thousand years ago as it is to-day, and therefore likely to be as true a thousand years hence as it is now? With this thought in mind, we may notice that developed or progressive doctrine may be one of two kinds.

IV. TWO KINDS OF DEVELOPMENT

There is a development which means that new theories have been spun out of old. No new facts have been observed, no verification of old ones has been demanded. A certain proposition has been taken and various corollaries have been deduced from it. It has been forgotten that when we thus argue from one doctrine to another, the process of argument is little more than verbal.

The only corrective of specious logic, the observation of facts, has been overlooked. The ambiguity of language is forgotten. Inferences are accepted as truths, and are claimed to possess the same force as if they had been tested and verified. Such merely deductive reasoning may make sad havoc of truth. A development on these lines may be ingenious. It can hardly be trustworthy. It is certainly not scientific. In this sort of development an edifice is built upon theories. Theory succeeds theory, there is no verification of facts; you examine the branches, they are not of the same substance as the trunk. This development is heterogeneous.

There is another kind of development. It is the development which takes place when old truths are viewed in the light of new facts. No old truth or principle which has shown itself to belong to all time is ever finally set aside; though the mode of its statement may require re-casting. There is in this case no bald substitution of new truths for old; there is a growth of the old truth under new forms. The essential principle of the old truth remains. The tree may put forth branches, but it is the old tree. You may examine the texture of the wood in branch and trunk, you will find it the same. There is homogeneity in such a development.

Now the heterogeneous development has been a favourite one with religionists. There is a piety which is impatient of facts. It is important to prove a proposition which is believed to be useful. Some danger has threatened: apprehensions are felt: and panic follows apprehension. At such moments facts are not very carefully scrutinised. Arguments come readily to an imagination on fire with the fear of real or illusory dangers. Truth is in peril. Practical steps must be taken. A new dogma is formulated which, it is believed, will prove a strong buttress of the old truth. It is not seen that a distrust of truth is involved in such action. Examples will occur to your minds. The authority of the Word of God appeared to some people to be threatened, because of some trifling inaccuracies pointed out in the text. Good people took alarm: they had not faith enough to trust the truth to defend itself. Fear of consequences (short-sighted welcomer of the doubtful allies who bring new perils) invents a theory which will keep the assailant (or the supposed assailant) from the gates of truth. The doctrine of verbal inspiration, unknown before, is circulated. The wall of truth is daubed with the untempered mortar of a convenient fiction, till at last the salvation of the souls for whom Christ died is made to depend on the

accuracy of a numeral ; and a man's orthodoxy is measured by his acceptance or rejection of a reading whose authority can perhaps be neither proved nor disproved. The moment this takes place, broad, noble, and poetical utterances become narrowed down by a prosaic or literal interpretation. Bold and splendid imagery loses its majesty in being deprived of its meaning. The sacred writers are measured *totidem verbis* and not *totidem sententiis*. The verbal is the literal : the literal sense is declared to be the plain meaning : a dogma is built upon a metaphor—notwithstanding the very simple fact that in so far as a statement is metaphorical it cannot be literal. And so the mischievous process goes on ; and when a system of rigid theology is elaborated, the whole structure is called development.

The objections to this method are obvious.

In the first place, in a true development all that is developed must have been implicit in germ before it became explicit in the unfolding. In the next place, whatever is developed cannot contradict the original out of which it sprang. In other words, not every addition to the original can be called a development. When a child piles brick upon brick in the nursery, it is only by a figure of speech that we could speak of the development of his work. For a true development some organic

law must show itself in the various stages of the growing life. And whatever addition contradicts the original may be assuredly declared to be not a true development.

The truth of it is that there is nothing more common than slipshod language, except slipshod thinking, and it has become customary to use the words evolution, development and other similar terms, which have become familiar phrases of scientific speech, in a loose and misleading sense. It needs to be remembered that even when used with strict scientific application these words are only picturesque ways of describing a certain series of observed facts, or those sequences in which something of the inevitableness of law seems to reside. When these words are applied to matters in which no suggestion of inevitable law exists, the terms become mischievously misleading. A totally fictitious idea is imported. That which has been perhaps only the outcome of human stupidity, or caprice, or thoughtlessness, or ambition, is described in language which suggests a kind of lordly and divine order of events. Haphazard speculations, theories which have been invented out of heedlessness or panic are invested with the semblance of the majesty of law. When we remember the miserable shifts, the unworthy intrigues,

the bold brow-beating, the adroit ambiguities, the subtle and shameful methods which have often marked the history of ecclesiastical councils ; when we see that doctrines have sometimes been affirmed by the influence of parties animated less by the love of truth than by the ambition of triumph ; we feel that it is hard to dignify the chaotic and contradictory results of ecclesiastical intrigue and scholastic speculation by the term "the development of doctrine."

And when we measure those results by the law of harmony, *i.e.* when we test them by the question, Do the results show themselves related to the original substance by being in organic connexion with it ? we are only employing a principle which is most truly Catholic. The question which the best of the fathers would ask about any proposed dogma would be, Does this inhere as a veritable necessity in that which is acknowledged to be true ? Let me remind you of the words of Athanasius.

"They [*i.e.* the Nicene Fathers] did not write concerning the faith, It appears so : but, This is the faith of the Catholic Church, and immediately their confession of faith is added, that they might show that it was not a new opinion, but Apostolic ; and that the things which they had written

were not their inventions, but Apostolic documents.”¹

It is quite clear from this quotation that in the view of Athanasius a dogma set forth must justify itself as being inherent in what was Apostolic truth. No doctrine ought to be described as possessing authority unless it belonged to the range of that truth which was indubitably apostolic.

V. NO INFALLIBLE INSPIRATION PROMISED

It is evident that in the view of this champion of orthodoxy, development of doctrine must not be of the first kind which I have described, in which one theory is invented to bolster up another without justifying or verifying facts. But that the only legitimate development is that which is by the law of inherency, and that even in this case it must be tested by recognised facts. Now so far have some communions receded from this wholesome position that they have put forward a claim, which, if admitted, would exempt their teachings from the healthful test of truth and fact. This claim is nothing more nor less than the claim of authoritative inspiration.

¹ *Epist. de Synod. Arim. Opera*, tom. 1, p. 873 (Paris, 1627).

This claim is put forward most boldly by bodies which at first sight would seem to be the most opposed to one another in principle; but which have a great deal more in common than is usually supposed. The claim of authoritative inspiration is advanced by the Church of Rome and in the body generally known as Plymouth Brethren. Among these latter it usually takes the form of the claim to the possession of a spiritual power entitled to set aside as invalid any utterance of Christ and His Apostles on the plea that Christ spoke a sort of double language. Sometimes, according to this view, he spoke a Judaistic language suitable to enslaved Jewish minds. At other times He spoke to the initiated Christian. The spiritually illuminated are able by their special inspiration to perceive when Christ is speaking after one fashion and when after the other. His utterances when He speaks Judaistically are not binding on Christians. This is a claim of authoritative inspiration which looks like infallibalism. It closely resembles the Roman claim. Where this sort of claim exists it is not necessary to prove the right to promulgate new dogmas by argument. It is announced by an inspired authority: it is to be received. There is no need to inquire whether the truth can be proved by Scripture, or

the early fathers, Catholic consent, or the canons of councils. The defence of new doctrines and high claims is based on the plea of authoritative inspiration. One Latin theologian began a treatise on the infallibility dogma with the frank and bold acknowledgment that the new dogma found no sanction in the Holy Scriptures, or in the early fathers. Where then was the sanction and authority for so startling a doctrine? It was in the direct inspiration which attended the Pope and the Council. Extremes meet. The Plymouth Brother will not reason: he knows: the Spirit has illumined him: those who differ or who humbly ask for proof are in darkness. "I know by the Spirit that my view is right and yours is wrong." He resembles the Pope who felt his own inspiration so strongly that he is reported to have said, "*La tradizione son' io.*" This attitude is not new. It has been a favourite one of zealous and ignorant men who had not much aptitude for reasoning, or much patience for careful study. It was so much easier to take their own crude impressions and feelings as authoritative than to laboriously and patiently wait on truth. They inverted the Apostle's maxim. They proved nothing, and held fast to their own view without asking whether it was that which was good or not.

But it is said that there is justification—Scriptural justification—for these views and claims. Did not our Lord promise the guidance of His Spirit? Was not the Spirit to be sent which would guide men into all truth? (John xvi. 13.) It will be needful to examine this passage. It is the matrix text of the claim.

The text is cited as a proof that doctrines affirmed in various ages have been due to the authoritative inspiration of the Holy Spirit. In short it is affirmed, that when our Lord said to His Apostles, "He (the Holy Spirit) shall guide you into all truth," He meant that the Holy Spirit would reveal not only to the Apostles but to members of His Church afterwards a constant and vast array of fresh truths. But is there not a great assumption here? Does the text affirm that the Holy Spirit would give the revelation of new truths even to the Apostles? And if it does, does it convey any pledge of continual revelation to the Church after the Apostles? It seems to me that this is a very precarious inference. Certainly if it be a valid one, the whole history of religious controversy is an enigma. The early councils do not claim such a power. The discussion by which the decrees of councils were preceded show the effort of human minds to reach truth by powers of reasoning. There is no claim

of inspiration here, unless reasoning and disputation constitute inspiration. That a kind Providence may have guided the council, that the Holy Spirit may have helped individual men at the time may be quite true, but it is playing with words to treat this as the same thing as inspiration, as it is claimed by the Roman Church or the Plymouth Brethren. And what limit are we to place upon this claim of authoritative inspiration if we interpret the text in this large fashion, and extend the promise beyond the Apostles? Every spiritual necromancer may defend his madness and extravagance behind the words of the text. It is moreover difficult to understand why "you" in the verse should be made to mean you and also others who may come after you. And if you concede the extension at all, where is the line to be drawn? Was the promise fulfilled at Constance and Ferrara? At Warsaw, at Lambeth at the Vatican, at Chicago? It would be a strange guiding into truth which landed us in the helpless vacuities, the contradictory dogmas, the accepted and rescinded propositions which from time to time have found favour among Churches. If it be said that the fulfilment of the promise is limited to those councils whose truth is allowed by all Churches, I can understand that it is a prudent limitation, but I would have you observe that the councils in

question made no such claims and confronted errorists with no such text. On the contrary they show that their confidence of truth is based upon their belief that what they taught was Apostolic.

But the more important question is, Does the text mean what this theory implies? Does it promise that the Holy Spirit will reveal to the Apostles, and others after them, truth as it shall be needed? I venture to think that the promise means nothing of the kind. No office of revealing any new truth either to the Apostles or the Church afterwards is contemplated in Christ's words. To guide a person into truth does not mean that some special revelation of truth will be made to him. It means that he shall be guided into the understanding and enjoyment of the truth which he will be the happier and better for knowing. The Holy Spirit will lead him to the recognition of truth, not to the discovery of further truth. The office of the Spirit is not to reveal new truths, but to enable men to recognise in their own spirit the truths which Christ had already taught. "He shall take of mine and show it unto you." "He shall bring all things to your remembrance," were Christ's words. The process is not intellectual, but moral; for the Spirit would convince the world of sin, righteousness and judgment; and

these are moral functions. The Spirit would lead the Apostles to the embracing apprehension of those things which Christ had previously taught, but which were then only lessons and not yet convictions to them.

There is no warrant, then, in this verse for the pretensions which have been built upon it. It conveys no promise of further revelation. It conveys the promise of spiritual perception. It is not a promise to bring truth to us, but to bring us to truth. Christ Himself was the truth. No other was needed or is needed.

The claim, therefore, of immediate inspiration and consequent infallibility may be dismissed. It has no ground in this verse. It has no authority in Scriptures, Fathers or Councils. It is a novel claim, tending to the yet further rending of the body of Christ.

VI. REUNION MADE IMPOSSIBLE.

Such a claim thus advanced by the Roman Church is an obstacle to the reunion of Christendom. This is evident, and would be felt to be so were the same claims put forward by other Churches. Such a claim means that concession is not possible. Union with an infallible Church is only possible on con-

dition of submission. But reunion implies mutual concession.

VII. COMMON FAITH AS THE BASIS OF REUNION.

Here we touch another difficulty. Concession is good, but there is a limit beyond which concessions will be felt to be impossible. Each communion must concede much, but it cannot concede those elements of truth which it feels to be indispensable. Reunion can only be possible on the supposition that there is some truth which is held by the various Churches in common, for the very phrase, the reunion of Christendom, implies that there is a Christianity which all Churches recognise. Hence, the reunion of Christendom must be on the basis of some common faith. I know that there is in many quarters a strong aversion to the existence of creeds. We are warned of the dangers of dogmatism. But if Christianity has no truth to proclaim to the world it ceases to have any gospel, and in losing the gospel it loses itself. There must, then, be some central body of truth, which, held by all, forms the bond of common faith and common enterprise.

The spokes of the wheel may be many, but the nave must be one. On many important matters

Churches may teach differently, but may yet find union in some common symbol of truth.

The real difficulty of reunion arises when we ask where this common body of truth is to be found.

The differences which have separated the Churches since the days of the Reformation have been differences on what is called the human side of doctrine. The disputed points touch upon the spiritual relationship of man to God. They are unlike the points of controversy which agitated the early Church. The earlier controversies were respecting the Divine nature. They touched the question of how the Divine was to reach the human. The question since the Reformation touches the question how the human is to reach the Divine. No doubt each of these questions is important in its way. But questions which affect the nature of God, the mode of His manifestation to man, the working of His Spirit in the heart and in the world, are questions which were practically settled in the third and fourth centuries. Might we not take the settlement arrived at then as, at any rate, the basis of union? The Roman Church, the Greek Church, the Anglican Church have incorporated in their systems the Apostles' Creed and the Nicene Creed. And in the bulk of Christian communions the essential teaching of these creeds

is accepted. Moreover, if any common symbol is to unite Christendom, it must be found, practically, in one of these creeds.

It may be said that the non-episcopal bodies would be disposed to dispute this view. I think it is possible ; but I think that their dispute would be rather as to the form than as to the matter. There might be a reluctance on the ground that these councils have no authority, and that to submit to them would be an act of servitude ; but I think it could be shown that this argument is based upon a misapprehension. No communion accepts the decisions of councils merely because they are councils, but because they are councils whose decision has been verified by widespread assent, and on reasonable grounds. No Church can finally take up the position that the decision of a council, as such, is binding, for the simple reason that every Church disputes the decision of some council or another. Nevertheless, in the decisions of some earlier councils all Churches agree, but the authority assigned to these councils involves no surrender of conscience or of reason.

It is important to bear in mind the nature of the authority which such councils alone can possess ; for difficulties have arisen from the confusion of the three distinctive kinds of authority.

Let me repeat briefly what these are.

There is an authority of *order* which belongs to every Church, and the exercise of this authority will only be challenged by those who have so small a social instinct that they cannot judge by the law of general convenience—that law of edification of which St. Paul spoke.

There is an authority of *reason*, and wherever doctrines are to be formulated, *i.e.* put into intellectual form, the authority of reason must be employed ; for no other power can adequately deal with matters which by the nature of the case are intellectual. In other words, the appeal is made to the mind, the authority of reason cannot be set aside.

There is an authority of *conviction*. This is felt when the Spirit of God brings home truths to the soul of man. This power can be wielded by no Church and by no individual. It is the sole prerogative of Him who is the Lord and giver of life.

Now the work of the Spirit is in the quickening of the soul, *i.e.* in the awakening of the conscience, in the softening of the heart, and in the direction of the affections. We must not confuse this authority with the authority which makes doctrines clear to our intellects. To make truth plain to the heart is one thing, to make it clear to the intellect is another.

The former is the direct work of the Spirit. The latter, so far as it is His work, is usually through human channels. It is rather the function of the teacher who, acting on reasonable grounds, can convince the understanding. Now what the saintly men of old felt in their souls to be vital truths, they sought to defend by the best powers which they had. They consecrated their reason to the elucidation and establishment of truth. They claimed no infallibility; they dealt on reasonable grounds; they went to the earliest records and teachings; they sought to show that their teaching was based on these; they claimed no right to override reason; they acted on the Apostle's saying, "I speak to wise men; judge ye what I say."

But when the inspiration of the Spirit, which deals with the conscience and hearts of men, is confused with the authoritative over-riding of the reason and judgment of men, discord and chaos are sure to arise, as they have arisen.

The authority of conviction can never rest with these councils. That authority belongs to the voice of God speaking directly to the human soul. The utmost that any council can claim is either the authority of reason or the authority of order. In matters of order individual Churches must be

largely left free, and mutual toleration must be exercised. For the rest these councils must justify themselves before the bar of reason. The earlier and better councils never claimed infallibility. They were content to be judged by the harmony between their decisions and the Apostolic writings. They appealed to reason to admit that the things which they had written were not their inventions but Apostolic documents. To agree to the reasonableness of their judgment is not an act of servitude. To accept the symbol of faith drawn up by them in harmony with Apostolic teaching does not bring a man into bondage, seeing that these councils went back to the faith of the Primitive and Apostolic Church. In doing this they got behind the point of divergence. If therefore the Churches could retrace their steps and stand at a place before the parting of the ways, they might find, in the symbols agreed upon in those early ages, a basis of union which all might accept as expressing their foundation faith. If we ascend the divergent streams high enough we shall reach the parent river which watered the first paradise of the faith. We should reach purer waters and a simpler faith ; and simplicity of creed would not only make union more easy, but might make faith more wholesome.

VIII. THE MODERATE POSITION OF THE CHURCH
OF ENGLAND.

We may be content with the position of our Church. She takes her stand upon primitive records, upon the Scriptures. She appeals from the Church of the nineteenth century, from the Church of the fifteenth and sixteenth century (as the Church of the fourth century did to the Church of the first century), to the Church which Christ and His Apostles directed and established. She takes her interpretation of the Scriptures, not from the caprice of individual judgment, but from the collective common sense of Christendom; and—whatever may be good for piety or order in each particular Church—only the truths so established can be deemed essential to Christian Communion. Thus she stands in a position, strong, Scriptural, Catholic. We belong to a Church which has made no high-sounding claims, and which has insisted on no elaborate system of theology as indispensable to Christian fellowship. She has been content to ask only the Apostles' Creed, the Lord's Prayer, and the Ten Commandments as the conditions of communion. On some such simple basis as this efforts towards reunion might commence. But even

were this deemed impossible, mutual co-operation on questions touching the highest welfare of millions might be initiated which could promote only good. The federation, if not the intercommunion, of Churches might be established.

IX. A MORE EXCELLENT WAY.

Meanwhile more important than unity in matters of opinion is concord of spirit. The question of questions is the growth of spiritual vitality and conformity to the mind of Christ.

For though I have dealt with this question of the reunion of Christendom on the basis of some common creed, it has always seemed to me that there is a more excellent way. Better than the way of conference and council, for bringing about this reunion, is the way of Christlikeness, which is the true way of peace. If men were all Christlike in truth and in fact; if the whole soul of all the multitude of those who profess and call themselves Christians breathed the breath of Christ and were animated by His Spirit, then by reason of spiritual resemblance to Him there would be an insensible drawing one towards another. Intellectual agreement and dogmatic concord are not the whole of life. There must be unity of spirit as well as unity of

faith ; there must be a drawing together of the hearts as well as the minds of men into one.

It is the Spirit of Christ which we need. Far, far more than the increase of our knowledge, the increase of subscriptions, the increase of agencies, we need the increase of the Spirit. And, therefore, let me urge the seeking of that Spirit. This I would fain leave as my last thought. Let us unite our prayers for that gift. That the Spirit of Christ may descend upon our souls, and upon the souls of our people, upon our own Church and upon the Churches of Christ scattered throughout the world in these days of hesitation and doubtfulness ; that the same Spirit of love and of utterance which baptized the early Church upon the Day of Pentecost may be poured out upon all men and all Churches, will surely be our one and earnest prayer. For in proportion as that Spirit comes, will our hearts be drawn into that oneness which will make us ready to think fairly of our brother, to put ourselves in his place, to make allowance for his difficulties, to understand some of his early prejudices and training, and not to expect rigid intellectual resemblance between the minds of men or the races of the world. It has often been said that the history of the Church shows us how at one time there was a domination

given to the Petrine aspect of truth ; at another and later period came the Pauline aspect of truth, which had its hour of supremacy ; and that we may look forward to the new days which are coming, as the period when truth after the teaching of St. John will abide within the Church of Christ. If this forecast be right, then guided by the Spirit of love we may realise more and more that the one supreme truth for all souls lies in those blessed words of the apostle, "God is love."

This surely is what we must all desire, for if only we could anchor ourselves upon this truth, other truths would drop into their proper place and would assume their own proportionate significance or insignificance. In proportion as we are saturated by the Spirit of God, and the love of God and the love of man are shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost, shall we realise that among myriad diversities of thought, language, and custom, there is but one Lord, one Faith, one Baptism, "one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all."

SOME LAST WORDS

IT only remains to gather up the substance of what I have said.

When we consider the causes which have led to disunion we find them to be largely due to the desire to make some special or new doctrine indispensable to Christian communion. Churches have added to the essentials of faith, and men have seceded rather than submit. Where this has been the case, the Church which has made the addition has been guilty of the schism. On the other hand new zeal has discovered or rediscovered some doctrine which it believes has not been given due prominence in the Church. It has insisted that this doctrine is so vital that it ought to be made an essential of communion. Where the Church has been reluctant to add to its creed, the new zealots have broken away from the Church. They have formed a new communion in which the pet doctrine has played a conspicuous part, and has been made

the test of membership. Where this has happened, the seceding body has been guilty of the schism.

Broadly speaking, these schisms have arisen from the desire to impose new tests upon Christendom. If the Churches could realise this, one great step towards reunion would be gained. The wisdom of the Early Church in its reluctance to add new articles to the faith would be recognised ; and the steps backward to increased simplicity of creed might be found to be the first steps on the path of reunion.

But is there much hope of this? It is a sorrowful confession to make ; but the attitude and temper of some of the largest bodies in Christendom are not promising.

I. ATTITUDE OF THE LATIN CHURCH.

The Latin Church has deliberately added to the indispensable articles of faith. To the creed of Constantinople it has added the creed of Pope Pius IV. To the creed of Pope Pius IV. it has added the dogma of Papal Infallibility. It has transformed matters which belong to the realm of order and convenience into matters of faith and doctrine. It has taken up the attitude that the

only step towards union must be submission to her claims. Amiable piety may still hope that harsh words may be modified, and extravagant claims may be interpreted as innocent truisms ; but it cannot be too clearly understood that at the present moment, as during the past three hundred years, the most conspicuous hindrances to Christian Reunion are due to the Roman curia.

The hindrances which these constant additions to saving and irreformable doctrine have created might vanish, if the Latin Church were content to allow the principle that truth must be settled by patient examination and inquiry into facts, but, unfortunately, to advocate so simple and obvious a method of settlement has become heresy in her eyes.

In illustration of this we may recall the language of the Archbishop of Munich in his pastoral, issued in 1871, in condemnation of Dr. Döllinger. Döllinger had pleaded for proof. "The matter," says the Archbishop, "is already decided. A general council, legally summoned, freely assembled, and presided over by the Supreme Head of the Church, has, after careful examination, expounded, formulated, and defined the Catholic doctrine of the Primacy of the Pope. Every Catholic Christian now knows what the

Church sets forth to be believed. The Church to which Jesus Christ has promised His aid to the end of the world cannot require us to believe anything but what God has revealed. Whoever, therefore, opposes the dictum of the Church opposes God. Whoever neglects to hear the Church, let him be unto thee as an heathen and a publican.”¹

It is difficult to read these words without feeling how remediless is the breach which Rome has made in Christendom. We are filled with wonder at the spectacle of human intelligence and intellectual integrity reduced to such a condition of subjection and unreason.

For the argument amounts to this. The Church cannot decree anything except what God has revealed. Here we are tempted to agree, thinking that this must mean that the Church is limited to the declaration of that which it can show to be divinely revealed ; but we are startled to find that the proposition which seemed to limit the Church's power is meant to give it almost limitless extension ; for the other premiss of the syllogism is—the Church has decreed this doctrine, therefore it is divinely revealed. Then the only test of divine revelation

¹ *Declarations and Letters on the Vatican Decrees.* Döllinger, p. 106. (T. and T. Clark. 1891.)

is the Church's dictum ; and the Church is the Roman Church ; and to oppose her dictum is to oppose God ; and her dictum is the Pope's dictum. To oppose the Pope therefore is to oppose God. Cardinal Vaughan in his recent address at Bristol has (according to the *Times* report) stated very frankly the position of the Latin Church. "The kernel of the question of the reunion of Christendom consists in the admission of the Roman claim, that the Pope has received by Divine right, authority to teach and govern the whole Church, as defined, for instance, in the Councils of Florence, Trent, and Vatican, &c. . . . It is not a question of examining and accepting a long list of Catholic doctrines. It is simply a question of the fundamental and essential constitution of the Church. Did the Divine Founder give to His Church a visible head upon earth, with power to teach, define, settle controversies, and govern? I fail to see the use of discussing any other subject. Settle this matter, and everything falls into its proper place and becomes easy. Reject this, and there is no basis on which reunion is possible, even though men were prepared to affix their signatures to every other doctrine taught in the creed of Pope Pius IV." As long as such a position is maintained the reunion of Christendom, so far as it is possible must be a reunion without Rome.

II. THE EASTERN CHURCH.

We turn to the Eastern Church. At any rate, she puts forward no such stupendous claims. She prides herself on her close conformity to ancient creeds.

But efforts towards intercommunion have not hitherto been successful. In 1718 negotiations were opened with the Greek Church. Suggestions or proposals were made by a small body of Scotch and English non-juring bishops. The points of agreement and disagreement were set forth. The number of the latter was five. They concerned the relative authority of Holy Scripture and the canons of œcumenical councils, the worship of the Virgin Mary, prayer to saints, veneration of images, and worship of the host in the Eucharist. On these matters the English and Scotch Bishops differed from the Greek Church. The Eastern Church in its reply insisted on entire conformity in each of these points. Here again, therefore, we find matters, which are quite outside the teaching of the Apostles' or Nicene creed, insisted on as indispensable terms of communion. In other words, on these points, which, whatever their value may be, are outside the scope of the Nicene creed, the Eastern Church was not willing

to allow diversity of opinion. This looks like insisting on additional doctrines as essential to communion.

Nearly two hundred years, however, have passed since these negotiations took place. The world and the Churches may have grown wiser. We may hope so, but we regret to find a strenuous disregard of other Churches in Moschake's *Catechism of the Orthodox Eastern Church*. He says, after speaking of the schisms of the ninth and sixteenth centuries : "But the true, one, holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church, which is designated by the Creed, is our orthodox Eastern Church ; because, whereas the Western and the Protestant Churches have in many things perverted the Christian doctrine, our Church has kept it holy and pure, as the Apostles delivered it."¹ There is an unyielding tone about this declaration ; it has a touch of self-complacency about it.

But no one who reads the whole of the *Catechism* can fail to be struck by the genuine piety of its tone. We feel as we read it that there may be difficulties, but there need not be insuperable obstacles in the way of reunion. More light may come, better understanding of one another's position may be es-

¹ *Catechism of the Orthodox Eastern Church*, by Prof. Ignatius Moschake (p. 35). S.P.C.K. 1894.

tablished. The influence of race differences may be more sympathetically appreciated. Education may penetrate into the remote parts of Russia. The Bible may be more widely and carefully studied. The immense importance of the faith we hold in common may be better estimated. And when these things come to pass, who will say that Reunion is altogether hopeless?

III. OTHER CHURCHES.

With other Episcopal Churches of Christendom the hindrances vary accordingly to circumstances and race ; but, on the whole, none of them have, so far as I know, put themselves in irreconcilable hostility to other Churches.

There remain the various non-Episcopal communions. It would be outside my purpose to enter in detail into the conditions favourable or otherwise to Reunion which these bodies severally exhibit. But two matters are worthy of note.

One is the remarkable decline of interest in the special doctrines which were at one time the test-marks of particular denominations. The controversies which gave rise to some of these religious bodies are now things of the past ; and no

man's orthodoxy is challenged for taking one side or another on questions which wrought furiously in the days of our forefathers. This may be interpreted, I know, in an evil sense. It may be said to be the mark of indifference to truth. We remember the "down-grade controversy," as it was called. No doubt there is much ground for this view. Men have grown impatient of the bondage of certain doctrinal forms. Perhaps this impatience was bound to come as a reaction against severer times. But it is also symptomatic of an age in which all teaching and all systems are being tested. Men do not feel justified now in believing simply as their fathers did, or because their fathers did. The spirit of inquiry is abroad ; and with it the historic spirit has arisen. The result is that for a time many questions are brought into doubt. A period of suspense follows the opening of every inquiry. As facts and evidence accumulate, matters begin to look chaotic, confusion prevails, men's views become nebulous. But those who believe in truth will not be afraid. They know that truth asks that men shall go through fire and water, and mist and tempest to find her. The vessel which rides the storm most safely is not always the vessel which clings to her anchorage. There are moments of strain when even the stoutest chains will snap.

There are few individuals and few Churches which have not found that some of their supposed safe moorings are no longer trustworthy. But, it may be asked, will not the end of this state of things be inability to believe? No: will it not rather be the removal of things which can be shaken and the evidencing of those things which cannot be shaken? And will not the result be the more true estimate of matters of faith? We have got rid of much which was only temporary and accidental; we shall appreciate at their true value matters which were rather of personal than of more largely human interest; we shall discover how much of common faith exists among men who differ; we shall grow less denominational, and more catholic.

The second matter is the growth of a kindlier and more fraternal spirit among Christian communions. The yearning for brotherhood is strong, because the Fatherhood of God is beginning to be understood. On the part of Episcopalians and non-Episcopalians this spirit is growing; and men are wishful to think the best, not the worst of one another.

Herein we may rejoice, as at every sign of the spirit of brotherhood. Churchmen need not think that their loyalty is compromised by embracing, in

their desire for reunion, all who profess and call themselves Christians.

"The aspiration after unity," writes the Archbishop of Canterbury, in his Pastoral Letter of August 30, 1895, "the aspiration after unity, if it be intelligent, is a vast one. It cannot limit itself to restoring what is pictured of past unity. It must take account of Eastern Churches, of non-Episcopal Reformed Churches, and bodies on the Continent, at home, and among the multiplying populations of the New World, as well as of the Christianising of Asia and Africa, under extraordinarily varying conditions."

On January 18, 1672, Bishop Cosin was writing his last will. His mind was full of the mercy and love of God. He dwelt on the creed which he still clung to as death drew near ; and his heart went out in tenderness to all those who loved the name of Christ ; he declared himself as knit in spirit " to all true Christians all the world over." He wrote : " But in what part of the world soever any Churches are extant, bearing the name of Christ, and professing the true Catholic Faith and Religion, worshipping and calling upon God, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, with one heart and voice, if any where I be now hindered actually to be joined with them,

either by distance of countries, or variance amongst men, or by any other let whatsoever, yet always in my mind and affection I join and unite with them; which I desire to be chiefly understood of protestants, and the best of reformed churches: for, where the foundations are safe, we may allow, and therefore most friendly, quietly and peaceably suffer in those Churches, where we have not authority, a diversity, as of opinion, so of ceremonies, about things which do not adhere to the foundations, and are neither necessary nor repugnant to the practice of the universal Church.”¹

IV. THE WAY OF THE SPIRIT NOT THE LETTER.

Briefly and finally, what we need is more of the spirit of Christ. Intellectual agreement cannot always be reached: agreement in spirit is always possible. We better understand one another through love than through controversy. The spirit of Christ is not confined to one communion. It has shown itself in all. Love too enlarges the mind: it brings the weightier matters of spirit and

¹ Bishop Cosin, “Last Will” (*Works*, vol. i. p. 527). Anglo-Catholic Library.

character, of judgment, mercy and the love of God into prominence. It teaches us that our views are not the only views of truth. Our brother has something also to teach us. We need, not more disputation, but more of His Spirit whom we all love and venerate and by whose name we are called. In the language of Dean Stanley, "We need not fear to trust Him. The danger hitherto has been not that we venerate Him too much, or that we can think of Him too much. The error of Christendom has far more usually been that it has not thought of Him half enough—that it has put aside the mind of Christ, and taken in place thereof the mind of Augustine, Aquinas, Calvin, great in their way—but not the mind of Him of whom we read in Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John."¹

If, therefore, we are to promote the reunion of Christendom we shall best promote it by seeking the mind of Christ. It is by dwelling on what He was in life and character—by translating into our own lives and characters the lessons which He gave us—by promoting Christlike views—by striving to look at all questions as He would look at them—that we shall bring about the better days for which we yearn. He cannot truly pray "Thy kingdom

¹ *Christian Institutes*, p. 280.

come," who is not in earnest to do His will. And so what is needed everywhere is the prayer of that noble hymn of the Church—

"Come, Holy Ghost, our souls inspire."

For we say in the Creed that we believe in that Spirit, and we believe in Him as the Giver of Life. If what we need is more of the heavenly life, it is from Him that we must receive it. And when we think how earthly our life often is, how far from heavenly we have become through our petty-mindedness, bigotries, jealousies, and ignorances we must long for the spirit of a larger, truer, healthier life. Wonders, more striking than the healing of the sick and the raising of the dead, might yet be wrought in the Church, when, through the breath of the life-giving Spirit, hatred, distrust, and narrowness of mind should disappear, and men should measure one another more by their lives than by their worship; by what they are than by the account which they can give of their belief; by the spirit which is in them than by their imperfect theology.

And what will help our hopes and our prayers will be the cultivation of the belief that this Spirit is at work in the Church. We shall then realise that in a thousand unrecognised

ways the Spirit of God is bringing about the will of God.

“A thousand knights in armour clad
Hath the Holy Ghost ordained,
All His work and will to do,
By His living force sustained.
Bright their swords, their banners bright ;
Who would not be ranked a knight,
Foremost in the sacred host ?
O whate’er our race or creed,
May we be such knights indeed,
Soldiers of the Holy Ghost.

THE END.

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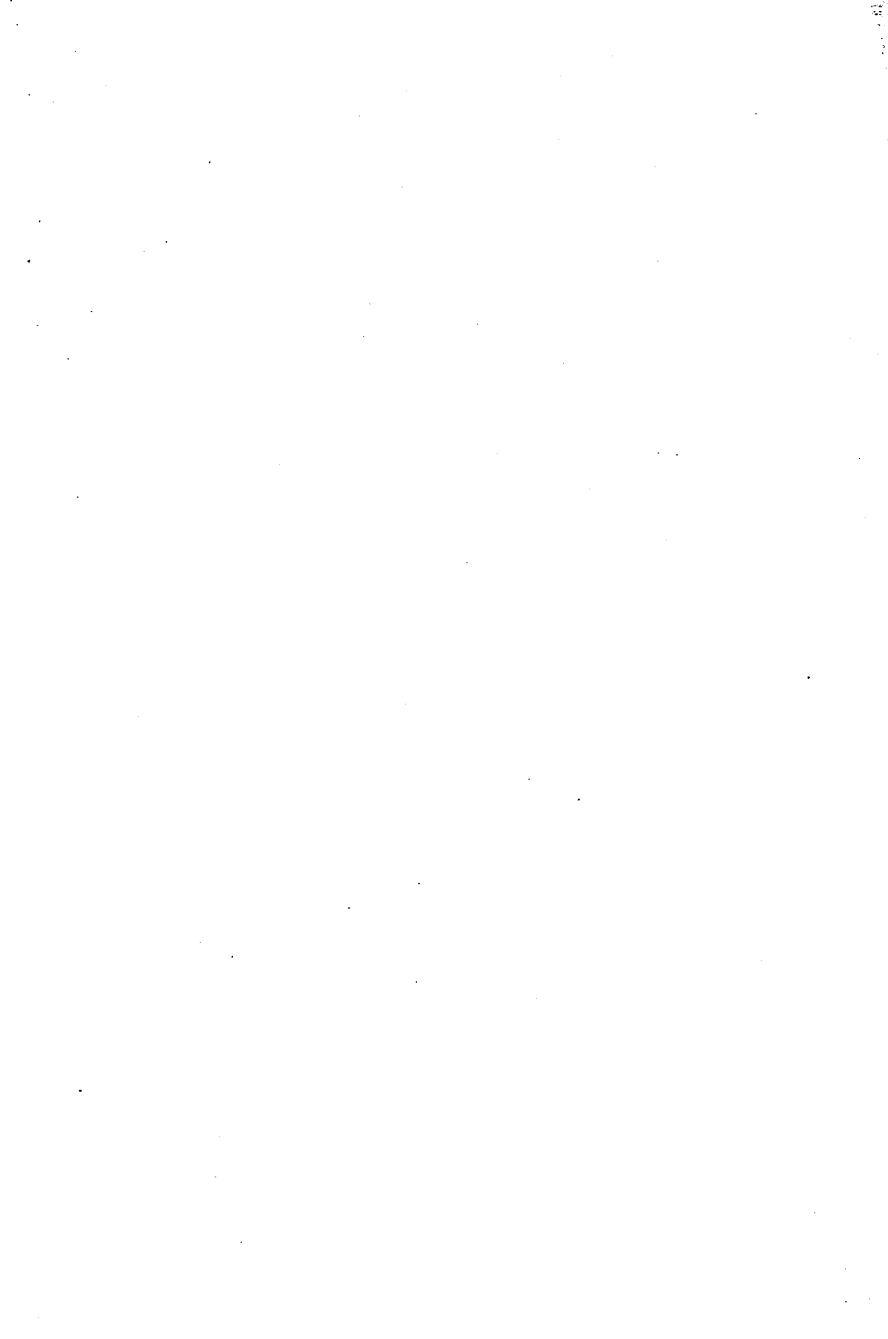
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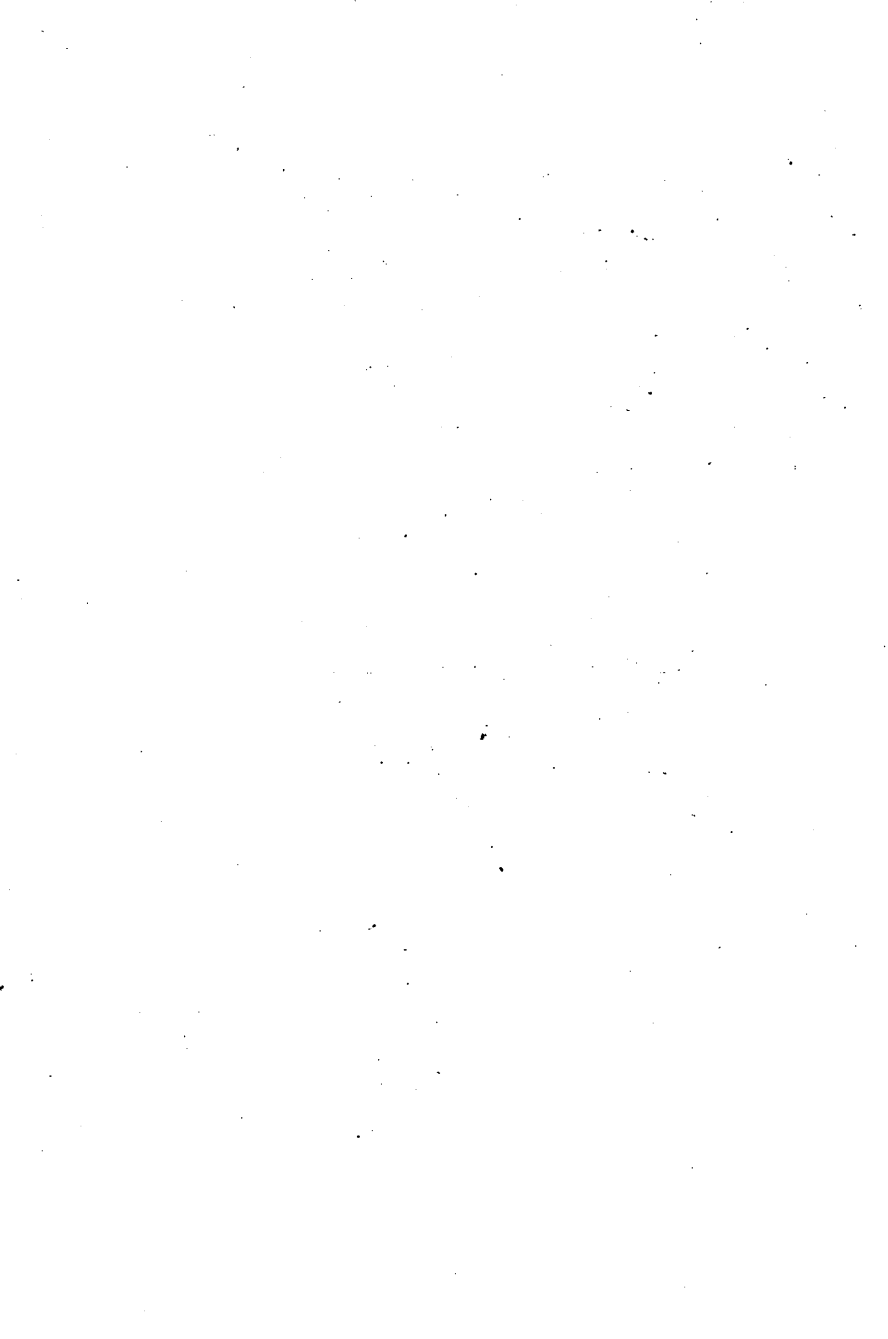
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